
THIRTY FOUR
CONFERENCES

Between the

Danish Missionaries

AND THE

Malabarian BRAMANS, &c.

CONFERENCE



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AND THE

MINISTERS OF THE

THIRTY FOUR
CONFERENCES

Between the

Danish MISSIONARIES

AND THE

Malabarian BRAMANS

(OR

HEATHEN PRIESTS)

IN THE

EAST INDIES,

Concerning the Truth of the Christian
Religion: Together with some LETTERS
written by the Heathens to the said
Missionaries.

Translated out of HIGH DUTCH

By Mr. *PHILIPPS*.

L O N D O N,

Printed for H. Clements in St. Paul's Church-Yard,
W. Fleetwood in Westminster-Hall near the Parliament-
Stairs, and J. Stephens in Butcher-Row. MDCCXIX.

CONFIDENTIAL

1852

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3. Mr. P. H. H. A. 1892

W.D.O.N.

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a copy of the original letter, and is signed by Abraham Lincoln.



TO THE
KING.

SIR,

THE following Conferences being an Essay to recommend to the *Heathens* in the *East-Indies* that Faith, of which Your Majesty

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Majesty is the *Glorious Defender* ; I have humbly presum'd to lay them at Your Royal Feet, as a Pledge of the indefatigable Labours of the *Protestant Missionaries* sent thither by the King of *Denmark*.

One of those *Missionaries* had the Honour to be graciously receiv'd by Your Majesty here in *London*, on his Return to *India*.

They have already gratefully acknowledg'd the Charitable Assurances they have receiv'd from Your Majesty's Subjects both in *Europe* and
in.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

in the *East - Indies*; and would, I am well assur'd, were it in their power, gladly embrace this Opportunity of repeating these Acknowledgments, by dedicating this Fruit of their Labours to the August Monarch of the *British* Nation, from which they have receiv'd so many Encouragements.

'Tis with the highest Satisfaction, that I assume this Office, as it furnishes me with an Occasion of Publickly acknowledging the many Instances of Royal Bounty I had the Honour
to

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to receive from Your Majesty and Your Royal Family both in *Germany* and in *England*.

May the Eternal Fountain of all Goodness long preserve Your Precious Life, invaluable to Your own Subjects, and dear to all who wish well to the true Interest of Mankind.

I am

(May it please Your Majesty)

Your Majesty's most Dutiful,

and Most humbly Devoted

Subject and Servant,

J. Thomas Philipps.



THE
P R E F A C E.

THE Country of *Malabar* begins at *Canonor*, a Town in the Northern Latitude of 11 Degrees and 20 Minutes; and ends at *Cape Comorin* in the Northern Latitude of Seven Degrees and Two Thirds, over against the Island of *Ceylon*. It contains divers Kingdoms; as, *Cochin*, *Travancor*, *Gundaca*, *Pimenta*, *Margate*; and abounds with Ports, as, *Calecut*, *Cale*, *Coulam*, &c. The natural Produce of the Countrey is so rich and profitable to the Merchants, that the *English*, *Dutch*, *French*, *Portuguese*, *Danes*, and People of other Trading Countries, have made large Settlements upon these Coasts since the Year 1524. when *Vasco de Gama* found the Passage to the *East Indies* by the *Cape of Good Hope*.

Most of its Princes are Heathens, paying Tribute to the Great *Mogul*.

The Inhabitants are generally good-natur'd, ingenious and very industrious; charitable to the Poor, but extreamly Superstitious in the Worship of the *Pagods*.

Some of their Temples are very rich, adorned with Galleries and Chapels, wherein are placed the Statues of several Men and Women, who, as they say, have lead Holy Lives, which are adorned with Gold and Silver Apparel, and attended with Lamps and Wax-Candles burning Day and Night.

They have their Annual Solemnities, when they carry their Idols in Procession, with the Sound of Horns and Trumpets, accompanied with a great Number of People; much after the same manner as the Image of the Virgin *Mary* is carried about in many Countries of *Europe*; only with this difference, that the Image of a *Mala-barian* Goddess is so hugely bulky, that several hundred Men must labour hard to move the Great Waggon upon which she is placed in great Pomp and State.

They make great use of Holy Water in their Ceremonious Washings and Purifications.

Their

Their Temple-Worship consists in Sacrifices, Burning of Incence, in Cringings and Bowings of the Priests, Young Womens Singing and Dancing to the Sound of Musical Instruments before the Idols ; the Inspection whereof is committed to the Care of the *Bramans*, who make a separate Tribe among the *Malabarians*, as the *Levites* formerly among the *Jews*.

They marry only in their own Tribe, and are very burthenfome to the Publick : For the whole Tribe is maintain'd by the Gifts and Liberalities of the Layity ; who are so stupid, as to believe these *Bramans* derive their Pedigree from the God *Biruma* ; and that they are therefore very holy Men. And they are proud and cunning enough to cherish this Ignorance of the People, by holding no Communication with the meaner sort of People, for fear, say they, of being defiled : And some of them separate themselves from the rest of their Neighbours (for there are Monks and Anchorets among them, who spend their time in Wilderesses and Caves of the Earth ;) and yet there is not, perhaps, a more wicked Race of Men treading upon God's Earth : For they certainly believe, that all things, how abominable soever, are very lawful, when practis'd by themselves. And the People are so infatuated by them, that they believe they shall

become holy, by partaking in their Crimes, or by suffering any Outrage at their Hands.

Besides, they are the greatest Impostors in the World: Their Talent lies in inventing new Fables every Day, and making them pass for incomprehensible Mysteries among the Vulgar.

One of their Cheats is to persuade the People, that their Idols Eat like Men: And to the end they may be plentifully provided with good Cheer, they make them of a Gigantick Figure; and to be sure, with a prodigious Paunch. If these Offerings, with which they maintain their Families, come to fail, they denounce against the People the Anger of the Hungry Gods.

They believe, that a Cow has something in her Sacred and Divine; and happy is the Man, who can be sprinkled with the Ashes of a Cow burnt by the Hand of a *Braman*; he, who dying, lays hold of a Cow's Tail, and Expires with it betwixt his Hands, thinks himself as happy as he that is to be buried in the Robes of a *Capuchin*: For thus assisted, the Soul departs out of the Body, purified, and sometimes returns into the Body of a Cow, which is look'd upon as a great Blessing, and never granted, but to Heroick Souls, who contemn Life, and die generously, either by casting themselves headlong from a Precipice, or leaping into a kindled Pile,

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Pile, or throwing themselves under the holy Chariot, to be crush'd to Death by the Idols, while they are carried in Triumph about the Town: For the Souls of wicked Men in their next Nativity must animate the Bodies of Swine, Dogs, or some more hideous Creatures.

And pursuant to this Doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls from one Body into another, they religiously abstain from eating the Flesh of any living Creature whatsoever, whether Fish, Fowl, or Four-footed Beasts; lest by chance they might feed upon a Body, animated with the Soul that lodg'd before in a Father or near Relation.

These *Bramans* boast of a Divine Law sent them down from Heaven, but couch'd in a Language that the Laity understand not; nor are they allow'd the studying of it; but must obey, and believe implicitly all that the Priest shall be pleas'd to prescribe as Articles of Faith.

The Moral Part of this Law is compriz'd in * Eight Precepts, *viz.*

I. Thou shalt not kill any living Creature whatsoever it be, having Life in the same: For thou art a Creature of mine, and so is

(* Vid. Henry Lord's *Discovery of the Sect of the Bramans, and old Persians who ador'd the Fire*, Pag. 42.

it: Thou art endued with a Soul, and *it* is endued with the same. Thou shalt not therefore spill the Blood of any thing that is mine.

II. Thou shalt make a Covenant with all thy Five Senses. First, with thy Eyes, that they behold not things that be Evil. Secondly, with thy Ears, that they hear not things that be Evil. Thirdly, with thy Tongue, that it speak not things that be Evil. Fourthly, with thy Palate, that it taste not things that be Evil; as Wine or the Flesh of Living Creatures. Fifthly, with thy Hands, that they touch not things defiled.

III. Thou shalt duly observe the Times of Devotion, thy Washings, Worshippings, and Prayers to the Lord thy God, with a pure and upright Heart.

IV. Thou shalt not tell false Tales, or utter things untrue, by which thou mightest defraud thy Brother in Dealings, Bargains, or Contracts; by this Cosenage to work thy own peculiar Advantage.

V. Thou shalt be charitable to the Poor, and administer to his Need, Meat, Drink and Money, as his Necessity requires, and thine own Ability enableth thee to give.

VI. Thou

VI. Thou shalt not oppress, injure or do Violence to the Poor, using thy Power unjustly to the Ruin and Overthrow of thy Brother.

VII. Thou shalt celebrate certain Festivals ; yet not pampering thy Body with Excess of any thing ; but shalt observe certain Seasons for Fasting, and break off some Hours by Watching, that thou may'st be fitter for Devotion and Holiness.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal from thy Brother any thing, however little it be, of things committed to thy Trust in thy Profession or Calling ; but shalt content thy self with that which he shall give thee as thine Hire ; considering that thou hast not Right to that which another Man calleth his.

And as for their *Burials*, this is their Custom ; when any Man is desperately Sick, and past any Hope of Recovery, they enjoyn him to utter *Naraune*, which is one of the Names of God, importing Mercy to Sinners ; of which Mercy at that time he standeth most in need of. His Spirits languishing, at that time they stretch out his Hands, pouring fair Water into them, as the

(a 4) Offer.

Offering of his Life, praying to *Kistneruppon*, the God of the Water, to present him pure to God, with this Offering of his Hand. His Life being departed, they wash his Body, as a Testimony of his Cleanness and Purity.

This is the Ceremony observ'd in the Visitation of their Sick.

After this, for the Burial of their Dead; 'tis after this manner: *First*, they bear the dead Body to a River's Side, appropriate to such purpose; where setting the Corps down on the Ground, the *Braman* uttereth these Words: *Oh Earth, we commend unto thee this our Brother; whilst he liv'd thou hadst an Interest in him; of the Earth he was made; by the Blessing of the Earth he was fed; and now therefore he is dead, we surrender him unto thee.*

After this, putting combustible Matter to the Body, and lighting it by the Help of Sweet Oyl, and Aromaticall Odours strowed thereon, the *Braman* saith, *Oh Fire, whilst he lived, thou hadst a Claim in him, by whose Natural Heat he subsisted: We return therefore this Body to thee, that thou shouldst purge it.*

The Body then being incinerated, or burnt to Ashes, they disperse the Ashes abroad into the Air; and the *Braman* uttereth these Words; *Oh Air, whilst he liv'd, by thee he breathed; and now having breath'd his last, we yield him to thee.*

The

The Ashes falling on the Water, the *Braman* saith, *Oh Water, whilst he liv'd, thy Moisture did sustain him; and his Body is dispers'd; take thy part in him.*

So they give every Element its own: For as they affirm Man to have his Life continued by the Four Elements; so, they say, he ought to be distributed amongst them at his Death.

If you would know more of the Manners of the People, read a Volume of Letters written by these Heathens themselves, giving an Account of their Religion, Manners, and Learning to their Correspondents, the *Danish Missionaries at Tranquebar*; sold by *Mr. Mears near Temple-Bar.*

St. Thomas the Apostle preach'd the Gospel amongst the *Malabarians*; and Christianity remain'd there for many Ages in its primitive Simplicity; till in time, for want of good Pastors, they were in danger of losing the Remains of the Gospel, had not *Mar. Toma*, a Native of *Syria*, taken care of the decay'd State of Christianity in these Parts; who being seconded by diverse other Teachers out of *Syria*, the *Syriack Language* was introduc'd into their Churches, and the former Purity restor'd amongst them, till the time that the Opinions of *Nestorius* got footing

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ing in *Syria*, and thence were transplanted into *India*.

They have always, or at least for 1300 Years, been under the Patriarch of *Babylon*. (himself being subject to the Patriarchal See of *Antioch*) who, as their *Meterene*, or Bishop died, took care to send them another, which resided still among them, and was had in great Reverence both by Christians and Infidels : And in this state they were found by the *Portugueze* ; who extending their Conquests to the very Neighbourhood of these Ancient Christians, made use of all Arts and Stratagems imaginable, to persuade them to own the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome* : But *Mar Joseph*, their Bishop, would neither be flatter'd nor frightened from his Sacerdotal Obedience, due to the Patriarch of *Babylon* ; telling them plainly, that he had nothing to do with the Bishop of *Rome* ; and that the Bishop of *Rome* had as little to do with him : Whereupon the Archbishop of *Goa* thought it high time to act *a-la-mode de Rome*, and to employ those Arguments of Infallibility that seldom or never fail in trampling upon oppress'd Innocence ; I mean, Arguments of Steel, in the Hands of Horse-Grenadiers us'd to Rapin and Violences, and flushed with Successes : For some of those Veterane Combatants were sent by the Archbishop of *Goa* to find out
Mar

Mar Joseph, with Orders to lay hands on him, and bring him bound to *Goa*; from whence he was transported to *Lisbon* in order to be sent to *Rome* to study the Decrees of the Council of *Trent*, which was but then newly hatch'd; but *Mar Joseph* by his Address, and extraordinary Appearances of Sanctity, did so far insinuate himself into the Favour of *Donna Catherina*, who was Queen Regent at that time, that he was sent back by the next Ships to *Goa*, with the Queen Regent's Letter, ordering him to be permitted to live quietly in his Bishoprick. But at his Return to his Flock, he found it supplied with another Bishop sent from *Babylon*, according to their Desire: For they never hop'd to see their Bishop return again: This new Bishop's Name was *Mar Abraham*; who finding himself regularly called, and esteem'd by the Inhabitants, would not resign to *Mar Joseph*. Some ravish'd to see their old Bishop safely return'd to them after so many Persecutions and Dangers suffer'd for his Faith and Constancy to his Metropolitan, thought they could not, without the basest Ingratitude, forsake this Venerable old Man; but a strong Party stuck close to defend the new Bishop, till he was likewise taken Prisoner by the *Portuguese* Archers, and sent to *Rome*, where he was degraded of all his Sacerdotal Dignities.

The

The Third Bishop whom they laid violent Hands on, was *Mar Simeon* ; who was likewise sent to *Rome* ; where, after having been examin'd by the Inquisition, he was declar'd by Pope *Sixtus V.* not to be in Holy Orders, and was confined in a *Franciscan Convent* in *Lisbon*, where he died. This was the last Bishop sent from *Babylon* to the Christians of *St. Thomas* : For the *Portugueze* gave strict Orders that no Ecclesiastick should come from *Babylon* to the *Indies*, guarding all the Passages both by Sea and Land.

The Church being now without a Pastor, the Archbishop of *Goa*, *Dom Frey Aleixo de Menezes* laying hold of this Ecclesiastical *Interregnum*, resolved to thrust himself into this Bishoprick ; threatening the Heathen Princes, under whose Protection these Christians lived, with Fire and Sword, if they did not force their Christian Subjects to take him for their Archbishop : And having corrupted the Heathen Governours, they made their Masters believe, that 'twas not their Interest to provoke the *Portugueze*, in refusing to gratifie them in a Business of so small Importance ; tho' afterwards they found it to their Cost, that they weaken'd their own Hands, and strengthen'd the *Portugueze*, by the Accession of many thousand brave valiant Men.

Dom

Dom Frey Aleixo was empower'd by a Bull from Pope Clement VIII. to invade a Diocess he had no Right to, and to take Cognizance of all Errors and Abuses, by a formal Visitation; in which Bull the Portuguese Original hath these Emphatical Expressions:

Sobre as quaes causas & sobre cada uma dellas vos concedemos & damos pleno & largo poder, & autoridade pello tenor destas presente, lettras naon obstantes quaes quer Constituciones, Ordenaciones Apostolicas, geraes, ou especiaes ou feitas em Consilios, Provinciaes Synodales & principalmente do decreto do consilio Tridentino que prohibe, que se nom possam formar processos ainda informativos contra Bispos se naon per vigor de comission, assinada de propria mano de Pontifice Romano. Jornada de Arcebispo de Goa, Fol. 10.

In all and every one of these Cases, we constitute you our Plenipotentiary, to act according to the Tenor of this Letter, maugre all Constitutions, and Apostolical Ornances, whether made in General or Provincial Councils; and more particularly, notwithstanding the express Decree of the Council of Trent, which orders, that not so much as an Information shall be taken against a Bishop, unless it be by a Commission signed by the Pope's own Hand.

This

This thundering Bull for apprehending the *Malabarian* Bishop, and invading his Bishoprick, is not translated by Dr. Geddes in his History of the Church of *Malabar*, prefixed to the Decrees of the Synod of *Diamper*; which Book, if recommended to our *English* People, would put Modern Popery in a clearer Light, than all the Books of Controversies can do: And it may be, the tyrannick dragging of ancient Bishops thus out of their own Countrey and Diocesses, and harrassing them about the World, would rouse up a generous Indignation in the Hearts of *Roman Catholicks* themselves, and recover them from their hitherto invincible Bigotry.

Dom *Frey Aleixo*, pursuant to this Order, began his Visitations, going from one Parish Church to another; but finding some Villages guarded by armed Men, who resolved to defend their ancient Religion, his Lordship betook himself to the Sea, to save himself from the Fury of an injur'd People, whose Bishops had been treated so barbarously: Other Villages he found without Inhabitants (for they had fled away at the News of the *Romish* Bishop's Approach.) And thus he had but little Respect shew'd him in his new Diocess; and less Hope of Success, till the Heathen Princes commanded their Christian Subjects to acknowledge him
for

their Head in Ecclesiastical Affairs. Whereupon he call'd a Synod at *Diampier*, a Town in the Mountains of *Malabar*; where an hundred and fifty Churchmen of *St. Thomas* appearing, they were accus'd of these things following, as Heresies, *viz.* That they had married Wives; That they own'd the Patriarch of *Babylon* to be their Principal in Spirituals; That they own'd but Two Sacraments, *viz.* Baptism celebrated without Godfathers or Godmothers, without Cream and without Spittle; and the Lord's Supper under both kinds (Bread and Wine) to be administred to all the Faithful; denying the Bodily Presence, commonly call'd *Transubstantiation*; That they had no Instrumental Musick, nor Images in their Churches, except the Sign of the Cross; That they neither invoc'd Saints, nor believ'd Purgatory; That they had no Holy Water, and did not acknowledge Guardian Angels; That they did not believe the Pope to be the Head of the Universal Church; That they knew nothing of Confirmation, nor of Godfathers and Godmothers made use of in the Celebration of this Ceremony by the Church of *Rome*; That they had no Monks, nor Friars, nor any other Names of Dignity, but Bishop and Deacon.

These

These were some of the Opinions whereof they were accus'd, and oblig'd to abjure forthwith; and, to their great Surprize, were forced to separate themselves from their lawful Wives, or be suspended from all Church-Benefices.

'Twas likewise decreed, that *Syrian* and *Chaldean* Books should be burnt, or corrected by the *Jesuits*, that by so doing, no ancient *Indian* Apostolical Monuments might remain in those Parts, to reflect Reproach upon *Romish* Novels. But notwithstanding this Ecclesiastical Tyranny, these Ancient Christians do still look upon all those Proceedings as wicked and unwarrantable; and are far from owning the Bishop of *Rome's* Supremacy; as appears from a *Syriack* Epistle, directed to *Ignatius* Patriarch of *Antioch*, from *Maha* *Toma* an Ecclesiastick in *India*, residing in *Chadenad* in *Malabar*, and sent to *Europe* by *Mr. Vander Duin*, a *Dutch* Governour returning for *Holland* in order to be further'd to *Antioch*; which he did accordingly, and kept a Duplicate thereof for himself; and got it translated into *Latin* by the Learned *Charles Schaaf*, Professor of *Hebrew* in *Leyden*, for the Satisfaction of the Curious World. The Substance of the said Letter is, to represent to the Patriarch of *Antioch* (whom he styles *Head of the Catholick Church*) the great Necessity the *Indians* have of a Spiritual

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Spiritual Guide, and desires they may be supply'd with such Men as are vers'd in interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

This Learn'd *Hebrew* Professor, was not contented only with translating *Maba Thomas's* Epistle into *Latin*; but writ to him a Letter in the *Syriack* Language, directing it for him at *Chadenad* in *Malabar*, accompanied with a Present of some *Syriack* Testaments lately publish'd by himself at *Leyden*; desiring him to compare them with their own *Syriack* Copies, and to inform him more particularly of the State and Circumstances of their Church; and whether they have any Writings of any other of the Apostles; and especially, of *St. Thomas*: And further desires them to favour him with a *Syriack* Copy of the Old Testament, sending them at the same time the Chief Heads of the Christian Religion, as receiv'd among Protestants.

These two *Syriack Epistles* are printed with their respective *Latin Versions* in *Leyden*, 1714.

But 'tis high time now, to give some Account of the *Danish* Missionaries; and what Success their Endeavours have met with, among the *Indians*.

In the Year 1705, the present King of *Denmark* resolv'd to send some Missionaries to *Tranquebar* upon the Coast of *Coromandel*. The University of *Hall* being apply'd to for

furnishing able Persons to undertake so hazardous an Enterprize, Two Young Divines, M. *Ziegenbalg* and Mr. *Plutschko*, Subjects to his *Prussian* Majesty, were singled out for this purpose; who having embark'd about the latter End of *November* 1705, arriv'd at *Tranquebar* in *July* 1706; knowing neither the *Portuguese*, commonly spoken in the Maritime Towns of the *Indies*, nor the *Malabarian* Language, without which there is nothing done in the converting of those Heathen Nations to the Knowledge of the Gospel; (for to attempt it by an Interpreter, has been found altogether fruitless.) Therefore they apply'd themselves to the learning of these Languages; which they effected in the Space of Six Months, so far as to be able to understand the Inhabitants, and to be understood by them again; and made some Converts that very first Year. But when they had made themselves Masters of these Languages, they convers'd every Day with the Heathens, and set up Charity-Schools to bring up the *Malabarian* Children in the Doctrine of Christ, and made many Profelytes among those that were of riper Years; preaching the Word of God at their own Lodgings, till the Hearers became too numerous: This put them upon building a New Church, which was happily finished, by the liberal Contributions of pious Christians:

stians : But not contented with this, they undertook the Translation of the New Testament, which was happily finish'd, printed, and dispers'd among the Heathens, which they now read very attentively in their own *Malabarian Language*.

The King of *Denmark* has establish'd a College, consisting of Ministers of State, Divines, and other worthy Men, to concert the best Methods, to strengthen the Hands of the Missionaries ; the Honourable Members of the *Society* settled in *London* for propagating Christian Knowledge, do furnish the Missionaries with Money from time to time, to carry on so pious an Undertaking, and have made them a Present of Paper, and a Printing-Press, to the end they may publish useful Books, for the Use of the Gentile World ; whereof many Catechetical Writings, and other small Books, for the Instruction of Youth, have been publish'd by the Missionaries.

And for the easier Propagating of Christian Knowledge, they have erected there a Paper-Mill, which may in time prove advantageous to the Mission ; Paper being a dear Commodity in the *Indies*.

They have in a few Years baptiz'd above two Hundred and fifty of the Heathens ; which, if we consider the Fewness of the Labourers, the Difficulty of the Undertaking, the Pains, and Care they take of their new

Disciples; add to this, the great Service they have done to Posterity, in composing a Grammar, and Dictionary in that Language; and finish'd the Translation of the Old Testament; one may boldly say, that these two Honest Gentlemen have done more Service to Christ and his Gospel, than the *Spaniards* and *Portugueze* have done for these last two Hundred Years, in both the *Indies*: For 'tis manifest they have been as careful to conceal from the Knowledge of the poor *Indians*, the Rich Mines comprehended in the Sacred Volumes of the Old and New Testaments, as they have been diligent to find out their Rich Mines of Gold and precious Stones.

And as for their great Number of Profelytes, 'tis done by Force and Violence; whereof the Heathens are as much sensible, and scandaliz'd at their cruel Proceedings, as Protestants can be at the bloody Tribunal of their Inquisition; as appears by the Speech of one *Gemalio* an *Indian*, when the *Portugueze* were driven out of the Island *Ito*: Wherein he told them in a full Assembly, that if they preach to others, that there was a God in Heaven who observ'd all that was done on Earth, and would certainly reward all Good, and punish all Evil Deeds, without believing it themselves, or without practising what they believ'd; they were guilty of such Crimes, which

which such a God must certainly detest above all others.

You preach Christ crucified unto us, said he, and at the same time Crucifie those you have persuaded to believe in him. You must know, that we are not ignorant of what you have done to King Xael ; and how you rewarded his great Kindness and Civility to you, with Violence and Outrages.

The Portuguese Historian who relates it, makes this Reflection : *Thus we lose Places by our Insolencies, which we gained by our Valour. And their Profelytes are ignorant of Christianity ; knowing little more than Ave Maria, Pater-noster, and how to cross themselves on all Occasions. But our Protestant Missionaries know of no other Method of Converting the Heathens, but that of the Apostles themselves, viz. Persuasions and convincing Reasons, setting forth the Corruptions of Human Nature, and the Necessity of a Mediator ; as will appear by the following Conferences ; and more particularly, if you read a Book call'd Propagation of the Gospel in the East ; being an Account of the Success of their Mission ; Containing a Narrative of their Voyage to the Coast of Coromandel ; their Settlement at*
Tran.

Tranquebar, the Divinity and Philosophy of the Malabarians, their Language and Manners, the Impediments obstructing the Conversion of the Heathens. Printed by the Directions of the Society for Propagating of Christian Knowledge.

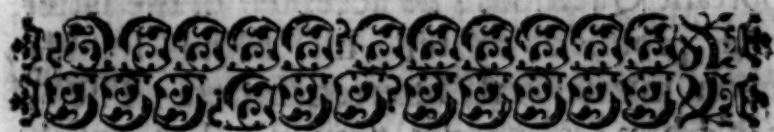
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Conference I.

*Of the Original of Good and
Evil, and the Means of
Salvation through Jesus
Christ,*

Between a *BRAMAN* and one of the
Danish Missionaries.

UPON the Sixth of *March*, 1707,
I *Bartholomew Ziegenbalgen* was
visited by a Grave and Learned
Braman: And asking him, what
he propos'd to himself by his Friendly Vi-
sit, he reply'd, That he desir'd to confer
with me amicably about the great Things
and Matters of Religion. Whereupon I
ask'd him, whether he would propose to
B me,

me, or that I should lay before him some Important Questions; he accepted of the latter, and promis'd to tell his Mind frankly, upon my several Interrogatories. Then I ask'd him, if he did seriously believe the the Existence of One Supreme Being? He replied, Yes. Then, proceeded I, how can that be, while you *Malabarians* believe a Plurality of Gods? We allow, reply'd the *Braman*, but One Primary and Sovereign Being, the Source and Fountain of all created Derivations, and the Principle of all other inferiour diminutive Beings; and constantly profess, that the Great *Triad* of Deities, *Ifuren*, *Wischnu* and *Biruma*, acknowledge him for their Sovereign Lord and Master, as the great Number of other Gods act under the Direction of the Three foremention'd *Numens*, *Ifuren*, *Wischnu* and *Biruma*: And this is the true Reason why our Sacred Books make frequent mention of a Plurality of Gods; tho' really, and in truth, all of them are but Vicegerents, and Lieutenants superintending the Works of Creation, and the Actions of Men, in their respective different Capacities, under the high Command of the Prime Cause; whom we, in and through them, revere and worship: And our Adorations thus perform'd according to his own Prescription, are as accep-

of the Means of Salvation.

acceptable unto the Supreme Being, as if immediately directed to himself.

Then I resum'd; God has liberally blest'd you *Malabarians* with Strength of Thought and Readiness of apprehending the various Aspects and mutual Relations of all Sublunary Things: But I am all Amazement, when I see your Blindness in not discerning Spiritual Things; as if you had sworn Eternal Allegiance to the Dictates and Poetical Fictions of Lying Bards; who riding upon the Ridges of Metaphors and Allegories, have rhimed you into the Belief of lying incomprehensible Perplexities. For is not this the Extremity of Madness, to believe, that the Supreme Being is divided and subdivided into many Subordinations of Deities? This reflects Disparagement upon the GREAT ONE, and tarnishes the Glory of his most Incommunicable Attribute. And the Cause of this gross Ignorance, so rise amongst you, is your want of being instructed out of the Revealed Word of the Living God: For your Fathers, stopping their Ears to the kindly Invitations of Divine Wisdom, God in Anger gave them up to a Spirit of Delusion, and to the Belief of Lies: And you treading in the Steps of Lying Antiquity, and believing your vain Traditions, are, even to this

B 2

Day,

Day, as ignorant of the Nature of God, as ever your Fathers were; and utter such gross Inconsistencies upon this Point, as if you acknowledg'd no real Object of Adoration: For tho' verbally you own the Existence of One Supreme Being; yet you have no Knowledge of his Nature and Attributes, nor of his Will and Pleasure, with relation to the Mode or Manner of Worship due to him, and required by him from all the Rational World: For when you talk of your many Gods and Goddesses, you are at a loss to whom you had best address your Vows, or offer Bloody Sacrifices: Moreover, you relate such Disagreement of your numerous Gods, that they seem to live in a continu'd State of War among themselves. For if you incense *Isuren*, *Wischtnu* is dissatisfied; and if this is honour'd by his Votaries, the other resents it grievously; and you may be sure to meet with greater Effects of substantial Mischief from the one, than Divine Largesses and Favours from the other; and this eternal Misunderstanding and Jealousie reigns among all the several Companies of Self-contradicting Gods. Therefore quit your selves like Men, and break off the Cords of inveterate Errors, and save your own Souls, seeking diligently the Knowledge of the One only True God.

The

The *Braman*, astonish'd at my Discourse, answer'd me very briskly ; Our Religion is Venerable for its Antiquity, and has been professed by many pious Kings and holy Prophets, thro' an *Uninterrupted Succession* of many incircling Ages ; which if false and erroneous, neither God nor Man had approv'd of the same, for so many continued Durations and Progresses of Time ; but certainly, some one or other had honestly discover'd the Imposture, and cautioned his Companions against pious Cheats, and sacred *Forgeries*. To whom I returned this for Answer ; Uninterrupted Succession, and great Throngs of Profelytes are no Characteristicks of the Truth of any Religion ; else it would follow, that the Devil is very Orthodox : For he is as famous for the Multitude of his Disciples, as he is for his hoary venerable Antiquity. But you must judge of the Goodness or Badness of Religion, by the Fundamental Articles thereof, agreeing or disagreeing with the revealed Word of the true God ; but you *Malabarians* having no Knowledge of God's Word, can take no Cognizance of what is true Worship, believing with an implicit Faith, the Fables and *Reveries* of Tradition-mongers, your Poets and Doctors : Pray, do but consult your own Understanding, and take

an impartial Survey of your own Religion, in all its Parts and Intentions; and if you are not resolv'd to affront your own Conscience, you'll easily perceive, that the whole System of your Divinity is nothing else but a perplexed Jargon of incomprehensible Notions, inconsistent and destructive one of the other, as many wise Men among you have honestly acknowledged; who have courageously asserted, that there is but one God blessed for evermore: And your Conclusion, that your Religion is true, from God's permitting it to subsist for so many Ages, and to diffuse it self over so many fair Provinces, is altogether illogical, and an unjust Way of arguing: But you are blame-worthy, in that while you might by contemplating the Work of Creation, and reflecting upon the Convictions of your own Consciences, attain to the Knowledge of God: Instead thereof you love the Creature, and never make any Efforts to know God and your selves; therefore 'tis, that he gives you up to a reprobate Mind, in as much as you and your Fathers have refused to be instructed in the great things of God, who is no ways necessary to your Perdition: For even now he calls you to the Knowledge of the Truth; but if you'll continue in your Rebellion against him, he will not make use of violent Means to bring you
to

to the right Way, nor drag you into his Church by mere Force ; but he will deal with you as with Free Agents, persuading you with all the Evidences of Truth ; which if you obstinately reject against your selves, you'll certainly perish in your Sins.

The *Braman* answer'd ; God has created both Good and Evil ; Vice and Vertue, Happiness and Misery, owe all the Being they have to the Supreme Cause, without whose Will nothing can exist or have a Being in this World : For if some Men are vertuous and holy, and others vicious and wicked, all this is but the Effect of the Will of God : And if we *Malabarians* are mistaken in point of Religion, 'tis the Will of God we should thus Err : For who are we, to resist the Will of God, who has decreed every thing that is to happen to us in all the Course of our Lives ; and with his own Finger has writ every Man's Destiny upon his own Forehead : [*They believe the Sutures of the Scull to be so many Lines written by the Author of our Being, denoting every Man's future Destiny.*] I answer'd ; I allow God to have created all things very good in their kind ; but he created nothing that was evil ; but you reproach your Maker, by making him to be

the Author of Sin : For if, as you say, some Men in the World are necessarily vertuous and holy, and others, influenc'd by an Absolute Will of God, are as necessarily wicked, you *Bramans*, and your Employment can be of no use in the World: For those that are necessarily vertuous and holy, do not want your Instructions, nor Sacrifices; and those that are necessarily wicked, will receive no Benefit from all your ceremonious Burnt-offerings, and daily Prayers. Moreover, Kings, and Princes, who punish Vice, and reward Vertuous Actions, wou'd be as useless, if Men can't chearfully and willingly walk in the fair Paths of Vertue, and refrain their Feet from the Ways of Sin and Vice: And one might reasonably say, that God rewards Vice and Vertue equally, both being according to the Order of his Decree and absolute Will; and that he himself is the greatest of Sinners, with many more Absurdities which flow from your Opinion, and destroy the very Notion of Repentance: All which Absurdities you espouse for Truth; because you have no true Conception of the first Creation of Man.

The *Braman* answer'd, *Biruma* (the Supreme Being) creating Men in the Beginning, many of them became Devils, and the rest remained Men and Women.; from
whose

whose Intermarriages descended all the Nations of the World.

I answer'd, This your Notion of Creation is egregiously absurd and false ; For 'tis not *Biruma*, but the One only true God, created Men ; and not many, as you suppose, but one Man only, out of whose Rib he form'd Woman, and brought them together, and blessed them, that they might be the Parents of all future Generations ; and these our first Parents God created *after his own Image*, consisting in Knowledge, Righteousness, and true Holiness, without any Taint of, or Inclination to Sin ; but after some of the invisible Beings (Angels) rebelled against God, one of these revolted Miscreants, or Devils, took upon him the Form of a Serpent, and with lying Delusions beguil'd our first Mother *Eve* ; she influencing her Husband, and our Father *Adam*, they both, by abusing their free Will, broke God's Commandment, polluted his Image, and made themselves obnoxious to his Displeasure, and to all the Shame and Miseries (the genuine Consequences of their Sin) that now cover the Face of the whole Creation : But from the Beginning it was not so : For God made every thing in its kind very good ; but the Devil, in combination with the free Will of Man, introduc'd

roduc'd Sin into the World: For when we see a Stately Palace, built at the Infinite Expences of a potent Prince, for his own Royal Habitation, burnt down with Fire, no Man will say, that the King was the Incendiary; but some of his Enemies, or his negligent Domesticks. The Application of the *Simile* is easie and to our purpose; especially when we find all this made out clearly unto us in the holy Word of God: And this is the true Historical Account of the Original of Evil, and of its first Appearance upon the Stage of the World; and if you please to exercise the Vertue of Patience a little longer, I'll shew the true Way and Means of being deliver'd from this State of Corruption wherein we live; that we may enjoy the true Liberty of the Children of God.

Then I proceeded, That Man was created without Sin, according to the Image of God, as is proved already; and that we are now deprived of the same, as by sad Experience every one feels in himself; and 'tis as plain, that being great Sinners, and Enemies to God, we are not capable to atone offended Majesty: For divine Justice requires Satisfaction at our hands, either Actively, in repairing the Breaches already made, by sinless Obedience
for

of the Means of Salvation. II

for the future ; or Passively, by undergoing for ever in Hell the Punishments of our Sins. But neither Man nor Angel being able to satisfy the strict Demands of the Divine Justice, God himself, out of his infinite Loving-kindness to Mankind, promised to send his Only-begotten Son into the World, to be their Redeemer, by cloathing himself with our Nature, suffering and dying for the Sins of the World, to the end that the Justice of God might be fully satisfied, and that all Men believing in this promised Redeemer, might be saved from the Guilt of Sin, and obtain eternal Happiness ; and that such as did not exercise Repentance towards God, and Faith towards the promis'd Redeemer, should perish in their Sins. Now, all such as embraced the promis'd Redeemer, were in Deed and in Truth *Christians* (no regard had to the Circumstances of Time or Place ;) For tho' they were not then call'd so ; yet, inasmuch as they believ'd the Redeemer, who is the Christ, they were really Christians. And thus you see, that the Christian Religion has been profess'd from the Beginning of the World, and is certainly the most *Ancient* of all Religions ; and your Religion is nothing else but the Corruption of ours. Yet we, that in all times profess'd the best of Religions, had but few Followers :

ers : But your False One, consisting of Foolish Inventions of Men, has been always throng'd with Multitudes; As the People of *Israel*, acknowledging the True Religion, were but a Little Flock, compared with all the Nations of the Earth that professed the grossest Idolatry. This promised Redeemer, or *Messias*, was to be born an *Israelite*, according to the sure Word of Prophecy, spoken long before of his coming into the World, with the Time, the Place, and all the other most diminutive Circumstances, of his Birth and Education, Life, Sufferings, Death, Burial and Resurrection from the Dead on the Third Day : All which Scripture-Prophecies have been circumstantially fulfilled in our Redeemer. He was born a Man, and was named *Jesus*, conversed amongst Men the Space of Thirty three Years, did many Miracles, taught the Way of Salvation to his Brethren, liv'd a Life free from all Appearance of Sin, satisfied the Justice of God for our Sins, which otherwise we should have done in our own Persons during all the Ages of Eternity. And thus was all Mankind redeemed from the penal Consequences of Sin. And God, willing to assure all Nations, that he was reconciled to them thro' the Merits of Christ's Death and Sufferings, raised him from the Dead; who

who ascended visibly into Heaven, promising to send the Holy Spirit, who should comfort them, and reside among them, lead them into all Truth, commanding them at the same time to teach all Nations the Way of Salvation; thro' whose Hands he work'd Miracles, so that in a little time many Thousands believed in his Name, and embraced his Divine and Heavenly Precepts for the Rules of Holy Conversation. 'Twas about this time that we *Europeans* were blessed with the joyful Tidings of the Gospel; which, in progress of time rooted out all the Errors of Paganism, which the several Inhabitants unanimously professed before. And 'tis recorded in History, that the Apostle *St. Thomas*, one of Christ's Disciples, came about the same time into this Country, and preached the Gospel of Salvation to your Fathers; but few of them did close with the gracious Offers; but continu'd to be disobedient, as you do at this Time: Yet, for all this, God is not wearied in seeking your Eternal Happiness. Therefore obey the Voice of Heaven, that invites you to Repentance, and to believe in his Son Jesus Christ, that you may receive the Remission of your Sins here, and Eternal Happiness hereafter.

To

To this the *Braman* answer'd, I believe all you say of God's Dealings with you *White Europeans*, to be true; but his Appearances and Revelations among us *Black Malabarians*, have been quite otherwise: And the Revelations he made of himself in this Land are as firmly believ'd here to be true, as you believe those made in your Country: For as Christ in *Europe* was made Man; so here our God *Wischnu* was born among us *Malabarians*; And as you hope for Salvation through Christ; so we hope for Salvation through *Wischnu*; and to save you one way, and us another, is one of the Pastimes and Diversions of Almighty God.

I reply'd; your God *Wischnu's* changing Forms and Shapes so ridiculously often, of which your Writers make so great a Stirr, is so unworthy of a Wise, Holy God, that 'tis certainly the Design of a deluding Devil, to impose upon your credulous Disposition, to believe the grossest Absurdities: For you own, he was once metamorphos'd or changed into a Swine; at another time, into a Fish, into a Tortois, and into half Lion and half Human shape. Pray, how can you believe that such a Monster could be the Redeemer of Mankind? For who could converse

with

with such a Monster, to the End that they might believe he came to redeem Men rather than Swine, Fish, Tortois, and other wild ravenous Creatures? If he had come into the World with an Intention of saving Men, he would have taken upon him Human Shape, to the end that Man might learn his Heavenly Instructions, and emulate his Holy Conversation; but withal you seem to insinuate, that in order to save Mankind, he appear'd under the Name of *Wamanen*, *Ramen*, and *Pischnen*; but upon reading the whole History of this your Multifariously formed God, I find he was the Author of cruel Bloody Wars, tending to render the Children of Men more the Children of Perdition and Slaves to Sin, than they were before. Therefore I am all Astonishment, when I see you *Bramans* believing such ridiculous Whimsies, and laying them before your Brethren as Holy and Sanctified Mysteries.

Hereupon, he only said, every one may be saved by his own Religion, if he does what is Good, and shuns Evil.

But I answer'd, no Man can come to the Knowledge of what is good, and of what is evil, without the Word of God; and more especially, 'tis impossible for you to attain

attain to the Knowledge of your own Natural Blindness and Corruption, or to exert any truly vertuous Actions by your own Sufficiency : For if you would in earnest forsake Evil, and do good, you must apply to Christ, the Fountain and Spring of all that is good ; be baptized in his Name, and believe in him as your only Saviour and Redeemer : 'Tis then you'll be enlighten'd and renewed in the inward Man, and enabled thro' assisting Grace, to shun Evil, and to perform Vertuous Actions, acceptable and well pleasing to the ever-blessed God.

Then, he reply'd, as I am no Lover of Contention, so I freely own, that I cannot blame any Part of all that you have said ; but still I am of the same Opinion, that if we lead Lives morally inoffensive, and strictly vertuous, we have no need of the Christian Religion, to make our Persons or Actions more acceptable to God. I don't comprehend, how Baptism and Faith can influence my Actions, or procure me the Forgiveness of my Sins.

To conclude, I said to him, the Necessity of Faith in Christ I have laid before you already ; but to give you this Faith, is not in my power. Go home, dear Friend, and prostrate your self before the resplendent
Throne

Throne of the Almighty Creator of the Universe, and beg him heartily to enlighten your Mind in the great Truths relating to your Eternal Happiness; and you'll find how necessary 'tis to believe in Jesus Christ. He thank'd me kindly for my Advice, and bid me Adieu.

C Con-

Thence of the Almighty Creator of the
Universe, and beg him mercifully to enlighten
your Mind in the great Truths relating to
your Eternal Happiness: and you shall know
necessarily, it is to believe in Jesus Christ. He
should be kind to my Advice, and bid
me Amen.

I am, Sir, your Obedient Servant,
J. C.

To receive, I have to bid you, Sir,
that you should be careful to keep your
Heart in the Path of the Lord, and that you
should be diligent in the use of the Means
of Salvation, which I have here set out for
you.

Conference II.

Of the Propagation of the Mahometan and Christi- an Religion,

*Between a Mahometan Priest and one
of the Danish Missionaries.*

ON the Fifth of July, 1707, a *Mahometan* Priest (that was Inspector over many subordinate Ecclesiasticks) accompany'd by some of his own Religion, honoured me with a Friendly Visit; and having heard, that we came into this Country to propagate some new Religion among the *Indians*, he told me, he was very desirous to discourse me

upon several weighty Points, inasmuch as he never yet had had the opportunity to confer with an *European* upon Matters of Religion : And to usher in Discourse handsomely, he told me, he wondred very much how we *Europeans* had in so short a time attained to the Knowledge of their Language, while our own Language is so harsh and difficult to be understood ; I answered, You may perceive Sir, that God has Designs of Love and Mercy, both towards *Mahometans* and *Heathens*, inhabiting these Countries, while he raises Men, who spare neither Pains nor Charges, to visit these Countries, and learn your Language, in Order to capacitate them to confer with you all amicably about the great things of God.

Whereupon he with a cheerful Eagerness, desired me to favour him with the sight of our Bible ; and complying with his honest Desires, I produced the *Old Testament* in *Hebrew*, and the *New* in *Greek* ; and he urging me to read and explain to him some Portion of the Old Testament, I read the whole third Chapter of *Genesis*, and gave him the Interpretation thereof *verbatim* in *Malabarick* or *Damulian*, being the History of the *Creation*, and *Fall of Man*, and of his being restor'd to favour upon his believing that first great Promise of a Redeemer. At which

which he seem'd to be more than ordinarily satisfied, telling me, his Religion agreed with mine in several Points, and desir'd me to proceed in reading a Portion out of the New Testament. Then I read distinctly the Third Chapter of *St. John's Gospel*, adding thereto in *Malabarick*, the Interpretation, Verse by Verse, which he heard, with all his Friends, very attentively; assuring me that his Religion and mine was in substance the same, with this difference only, that what we apply to *Christ*, they attribute to *Mahomet*.

I allow'd the Conformity to be very visible, and that his Observation was very reasonable, and begg'd leave to give him the Reasons and Causes of this Conformity; and told him how *Mahomet*, in Hammering his new Religion, was assisted by a *Jew* and a *Christian*; the one supplying him with the History of the Old, the other with the History, and some Precepts, of the New Testament; but both very much maim'd and imperfect: Hence 'tis, that what is good and wholesome in your Religion, is borrow'd out of the Sacred Volumes of the Old and New Testament; and what is otherwise, has *Mahomet* for its Author.

He answer'd, Pray, how can you judge so disadvantageously of *Mahomet*, while you know nothing of his History? Sir, said I, we Christians have a fuller Account of *Mahomet*, than you your selves have: For as *Mahomet* was propagating his Religion with Fire and Sword, the Christians; that escap'd his Fury, gave a full Account of his Proceedings, of his Person, Manners and Religion; which Relations have been faithfully committed to Writing, and handed down to Posterity: But all the Accounts you have of him, are writ by his own Creatures, industriously trumpeting his Warlike Achievements; but passing by all his Vices and Imperfections in silence; or by such, as fearing his Power, have not dar'd to write the Truth: And besides all this, we read all the Histories relating to *Mahomet* writ by those of his own Persuasion, with the *Alcoran* it self printed in *Arabick*, which our Learned Men do understand, and have translated into all the celebrated Languages of *Europe*; and therefore we can judge of all Matters relating to *Mahomet* and his Religion: Whereas, on the other hand, you *Mahometans* have no Notion of our Religion; which is the only reason why you addict your selves to the Doctrine of *Mahomet*: For he that never saw any other Bird but a Crow, will think it the finest

of the Propagation of Religion. 23

finest of Birds ; and his Croaking to be very musical ; but when he comes to hear the Melodious Notes of the Nightingal, he'll certainly change his Opinion. I leave the application to your selves.

But you Christians, quoth he, believe in *Three* Gods, and we believe in *One* God only ; pray, which of us then is the more mistaken in Matters of Faith ? I answer'd, Sir, far be it from us, to believe a Trinity of Gods., For I'll make it plain to you, by a familiar Comparison, that we believe in but *One* God only. For as we see but one Sun in the Firmament, which has Light and Heat, represented to our Minds under *Idea's* quite different from that of the Solar Body, or Globe of the Sun it self ; and yet Heat, Light, and the Solar Body, are so united together, that they make but *One* Sun, and not *Three* Suns : So by way of accommodation, this may be apply'd to the Holy Trinity : For we say, that in one Divine Essence there are three Persons, which are so strictly united together, that he that denies the Holy Ghost, does indeed deny both the Father and the Son : Therefore you *Mahometans* do not really and indeed believe in the one True God ; because you reject the Holy Spirit, and Jesus Christ, God blessed over all : For out of Christ there is no Sal-

vation neither here, nor hereafter ; and you can't believe in Christ, till you are enlighten'd by the Holy Spirit of Grace, to discern things that are Spiritual : For tho' Natural Comparisons carry with them some Shadows of a Trinity ; yet I own, they are not sufficient Convictions : Wherefore, the Advice I have to give you, is this, Go home and reflect upon the miserable State that Mankind is born in, and of the Rigour of God's Justice exacting Satisfaction for every the least Transgression ; and how insufficient we are of our selves to appease a disturb'd Conscience, or an offended God, with all our best Performances ; and then you'll acknowledge the Necessity of a *Redeemer* : Then proceed, and consider those Portions of holy Writ relating to the Person, Life, Doctrine, Death, Sufferings and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, confronting them with all the Particulars of *Mahomet's* History ; and pray the Almighty that he would Direct you to the true Discerning, which of the two Religions is more accommodated to the Exigencies of Human Nature, labouring under so many Spiritual Infirmities ; which if you do in Sincerity, you'll see clearly, that 'tis not *Mahomet*, but Jesus Christ, came to save Sinners from their Sins : And when you are come thus far, God will assist you with his Grace, and give you his Holy Spirit

rit to discover unto your Souls all the My-
sterious Truths necessary for Salvation: For
until a Man's Heart be chang'd by unfeign-
ed Repentance, he can't understand Spiritu-
al Things, nor apprehend the *Truth as 'tis*
in Jesus.

Then he re-assum'd and said, Sir, our
Law makes frequent mention of Jesus Christ,
by the name of *Isanabi* (Prophet Jesus) but
I can't persuade my self that God has a
Son, nor that Christ is Superior to our
Prophet *Mahomet*.

To whom I made this answer; This
seems to you absurd, because you measure
things of a Spiritual and Infinite Nature,
with your Finite carnal Mind; whereas you
should hear God speaking of his Son, who
knows his own Nature, and that of Jesus
Christ, better than any Creature can pretend
to know. Endeavour first, to know *your*
self, and to be acquainted with the State
and Condition of your own Mind; and
reflect seriously upon the most palpable
Absurdities spoken of your own Prophet *Ma-*
homet: For you say, he was next in Power
and Glory to God, and his most intimate
familiar Friend; and withal you say, he
made War with all his Neighbours, carrying
Devastations and Rapine wherever he went,
and

and, to encourage Licentiousness, allow'd *Polygamy* to his sensual Profelytes. Pray, what can be absurder, than to affirm, such a vile unclean Beast to be the *Minion* and Darling of Almighty God, who is an Avenger of all the Transgressors of his holy Laws, and every where enjoyns Continency, and Sobriety, as well as abstaining from Rapine and Violence ?

He answer'd, we know that he allows of *Polygamy*, or the use of many Wives ; but this is no Crime : For *David*, who was both King and Prophet, and his wife Son *Solomon*, had very many Wives ; and yet they are still reckoned to be Holy Men, and numbred among the inspir'd Pen-Men of Holy Volumes. And as for *Mahomet's* Wars and Violences he was Commissioned by God so to do, and to root out all the Nations that would not receive his Doctrine, and the Book that came down from Heaven.

We allow, said I, that *David* and *Solomon* had many Wives ; but this was not pursuant to the Commands of God, but to comply with their own sinful unmortified Inclinations, and the Licentious Customs then prevailing among the *Jews* : For as you allow the Gospel of Christ to be a *true*
and

of the Propagation of Religion. 27

and *holy* Doctrine, pray hear what he says upon this head, Matt. 19. verse 4. *Have you not read, that he that created them, created them Male and Female, and that they are but one Flesh?* And as to what you say of *Mahomet's* Spiritual Commission to destroy all such that did not receive his Doctrine, this is destructive of the Justice and Loving-kindness of God: For tho' he would that all should come to the Knowledge of the Truth, yet he never made use of Violence and Cruelty to gain Men to the Ways of Holiness; but he ordain'd, that the Preaching of his Word should be the Means of Salvation, setting Life and Death before the Eyes of Men, with all the powerful Inducements to embrace the One, and decline the Other; and then leaving every Man to his own Liberty of Chusing for himself: Therefore if *Mahomet's* proceeding with Cruelty and Violence be the Reverse of the mild methods of a loving God, it follows, that his Doctrine must be false, and that he was never sent from God, nor has in his Religion any of the Divine Characteristicks stamp't upon it.

Hereupon he only said, I must confess, there are many things in our Law, whereof I my self scruple the Truth very much; and, if you please, more of this at another Opportunity; but thus far for this time.

Then

Then I concluded, and assured him, if he continued in that good Disposition of Mind, and weigh'd the matter seriously with himself, thirsting after the Salvation of his own Soul, his Doubts and Inquiries wou'd redound at last to his Eternal Happiness; adding, The Lord Jesus Christ give you Wisdom, and an Understanding Heart, to know him, and believe in him, that you may be Partaker of his Death and Sufferings, and may receive Forgiveness of Sins in this World, and in the the next, Everlasting Life.

Then I took my leave of him desiring him to favour me sometimes with his Letters.

Con.
myself I struggle the Truth very much; and if you please, more of this another Opportunity; but this far for this time.

Then

Conference III.

Of seeing the Face of God,

Between some *Mahometan* Monks, (or,
as they call them, Holy Men) and
a *Danish* Missionary.

ON the Eleventh of *July* 1707, several *Mahometans*, whereof some were Merchants, and others, who pretended themselves to be *Sacred* Persons, lineally descended from the Family of *Mahomet*; wearing green Turbants, ask'd me what they should do in order to *see the Face of God*? To whom I gave this Answer; Suffer your selves to be guided by the Will of God, and not by your own extravagant Fancies: For if you don't compose your
Minds

Minds to a conformity to the Divine Pleasure, you can never enjoy the Heavenly Vision, neither in this World, nor in that which is to come :

They answer'd with an Air of Seriousness, saying, We live here among the Infidels, who all of them are very earnest in the Pursuit of Happiness, and anxiously desirous to see the Face of God ; They frequent their *Pagods* (Temples) they offer Sacrifices, they Discipline themselves with great Rigour, they perform tedious Ceremonies, go on Pilgrimage, do Penances, they retire to Desarts, renouncing all the Pleasures of Life ; and many the like Austerities are commonly exercis'd among them ; and yet we can find none of them that can say, he has seen the Face of God ; and we our selves being *Mahometans*, are strict Observers of our Law, go every *Friday* in the Afternoon to the *Mosque*, we hear the *Alcoran* read, and repeat very Religiously all the set Formularies of Prayers, and assist at all the usual Ceremonies ; and when this Round of Formalities is at an End, we think our work is over, and seldom are solicitous about *seeing the Face of God* ; without which, we are very well assur'd, that all religious Performances, are but fruitless *Pagantries*, neither acceptable to God, nor profitable to our selves ; and, this duly consider'd,

of seeing the Face of God. 31

sider'd, we make no difference between the *Pagan* and *Mahometan* Worship; For in this only we exercise our selves, that if by any Means and Enquiries we may be render'd worthy to see the Face of God: This is the Capital Point, in comparison to which, all other things are but mere Toys in themselves, and very insignificant. Could we but find any Guides to mark out the Way leading to this State of Happiness, we are fully resolv'd to erect a Church open always to *Christians*, *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, insisting only upon the Ways and Means of enjoying the glorious Presence, and of seeing the *Face of God*. And thus we would put an end to Religious Wranglings, Preaching and Propagating the Doctrine of *Universal Charity*.

Hereupon I reply'd, If you wou'd see the *Face of God*, and anticipate the Joys of the next World, you must endeavour to have clean Hearts and pure: For the Saviour of the World has said, *Blessed are the pure in Heart, for they shall see God*. Let this be your chief study; all other Efforts and Endeavours, all your Austerities and Mortifications, will stand you in no stead: For you know, that God is *most holy*, and no unholy or defil'd thing can approach his Courts: Therefore you must be holy, as he is holy; you must be all Glorious within, purified in the inward

ward Man from all *Self-love, Self-seeking, Pride and Hypocrisie*, which frequently inhabit the most retir'd Recesses of the Soul ; while, in the Judgment of the World, the Men pass for holy, harmless, and undefil'd Darlings of Heaven, and God's sanctified ones : but God will not be mocked ; For all your Alms and Sacrifices, and all your Austerest Performances, will draw upon you the Displeasure of Heaven, instead of the hop'd for Blessings, and distinguishing Favours of God, except your Hearts be clean.

Then they re-assum'd, and said, Pray Sir, if the Heart of Man is unsearchable, and past finding out, but by God only, whose Property it is to search the Reins and Hearts of the Children of Men ; what makes you to trouble your self with our Hearts which is not your Province, nor is within the Circle of your Activity.

Gentlemen, said I, you are altogether Strangers to me, (whom I never saw before ;) I know neither your Vertues nor Vices ; yet in Charity I am bound to hope the best of you : But as to the *purifying of the inward Man*, I am sure, 'tis a Doctrine that you *Mahometans* are little acquainted with ; being neither written in your *Alcoran*, nor ever taught by any of your Priests : And

as it is the *essential* Part of Religion, I thought it my Duty to begin with this great Point, whereof I take you to be most ignorant; and now your Unwillingness to have your Consciences examin'd, confirms me in my first Opinion of your Ignorance herein.

Then, said they, what Mortal can pretend to such high Degrees of Purification and Cleanness of Heart?

This Question of yours, reply'd I, gives me some grounds to hope better things of you, tho' I thus talk; For I find you have a mighty Desire to inform your selves in these weighty Matters; Give diligent heed therefore to what I shall offer to your serious Consideration upon this Head: When I speak of purifying the Heart, you must take me right, I don't mean any washing with Water, or any external Purifications, such as are daily Practis'd among Men of your Persuasion, and are easily perform'd; But the purifying the Mind, which is the peculiar Work of God himself; he only can renew us in *the Spirit of our Minds*, by the sprinkling of the Precious Blood of Christ; and if you would have your Consciences *purify'd from dead Works*, you must know Christ, and the **DESIGN** of his Death and Sufferings;
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how that he came into the World to die for Sinners ; you must believe in him for Life and Salvation, repent of your Sins, renounce the Errors of the Impostor *Mahomet*, and own Jesus Christ to be the only Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind.

You speak, Sir, said they, of purifying the Mind, and of renewing the Heart, upon the Principles of your Religion. Now, with your leave, we could speak in the Language of our Religion upon this subject very many fine Things ; but we are not come here to reciprocate Questions and Answers out of this or that System of borrow'd Principles ; for we are not addicted to any separate Sect of Religion whatsoever ; but we are come to hear of you the Words of Wisdom, which may guide us in our search of *seeing the Face of God*.

I answer'd, God dwelleth in Light inaccessible, and no Man can see him and live ; as 'twas said to *Moses* when he wearied God with this very same imprudent Request as you are now proposing. Know therefore, that if God in Mercy had not been pleas'd to reveal his Will to his Servants, we had been still walking in Darkness, for ever ignorant of the Way that leads to the Mansions of the other World ; where only we can expect

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to see the Lord Face to Face. For all that we Christians pretend to know of enjoying God's Presence in this World, or the next, is borrowed out of the Sacred Volumes of God's Word; and if you wou'd be assur'd whether or no, I am faithful in my Instructions to obtain the Enjoyment of God's Face, go your Way for this Time, and reduce to practice what I have laid before you; and then you'll find upon your own Experience, that all those things which I have communicated to you, are the Intimations that God has given us to direct our Steps in quest of his glorious Face: But if you are resolv'd to neglect my Instructions, I think it useless to talk any more upon this Head. However, I yet love you heartily for giving me an Handle to discourse upon this excellent Subject; and when you'll favour me with another Visit, you'll give me leave to ask you freely, whether or not you have begun to tread the Way that leads to the sight of the Face of God.

They thank'd me heartily for my Advice; and seeing me much engag'd in other Business, they bade me Adieu.

of seeing the Face of God

to see the Lord face to face for all that
we Christians pretend to know of enjoying
God's presence in this world or in the next
is borrowed out of the Sacred Volume of
God's Word; and if you would be assured
whether or no, I am mistaken in my impres-
sions to obtain the enjoyment of God's
face, go your way for this time, and re-
duce to practice what I have said before you;
and then you'll find in your own experi-
ence that all these things which I have
communicated to you are the Instructions
that God has given us to direct our steps in
pursuit of his glorious face. But as you are
resolved to neglect my instructions, I think
it useless to talk any more upon this head.
However, I yet love you heartily, and giving
me an Example to follow upon this occa-
sion, I say, and when you'll leave me
with another Visit, you'll give me leave to
ask you freely, whether or not you have be-
gun to tread the Way that leads to the sight
of the Face of God. I am, Sir, your
Obedient Servant, and heartily for my Service;
and seeing me much engaged in other busi-
ness, I have had me absent from the house
of God, and am now at home, and I am
in hopes that you'll find me as usual, and
I am, Sir, your Obedient Servant, and heartily
for my Service.

Conference IV.

Of the Misery the Malabarians labour under, both as to their Spiritual and Temporal Condition.

Between several *Malabarians* and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Sixth of *October* 1707, as I walk'd out into the Neighbourhood, where a great Multitude of Heathens flock'd about me, I sat me down on the Grass, as they also did all round about me.

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Then I began to address my Discourse to them in Words to this Effect: I heartily Sympathize with you in the Miseries you labour under, relating both to your Souls and Bodies. As to your *Outward* Condition, your Miseries are too visible; for you lead the Lives of Slaves, and therefore without doubt very uncomfortable; for I see, you are forc'd to undertake tedious Journeys to fetch your Rice, and undergo a Thousand other Hardships, which you are oblig'd to bear with Patience and Submission to the Will of your hard-hearted Task-masters.

But alas, what is all this Drudgery of yours, if compar'd to the noblest part of your selves, your *Souls*? You wander about like Sheep that have no Shepherd; for your *Bramans* don't concern themselves with your Everlasting Wellare; and tho' you have among you stately Magnificent *Pagods*, yet you never hear a Word of Comfort or Spiritual Instruction in those Places; but are permitted to walk in the Ways of your own Blind Hearts, and follow your sinful Inclinations without Controul, from either Priest or Prophet. And as for your selves, you mind only to support your Bodies with Food and Cloathing as if they were immortal Beings; and you disregard your precious Souls,

of the Condition of the Malabarians. 39

Souls, as if they were subject daily to Corruption. Yea, you live in the profoundest Ignorance of him that created you, and of him that redeemed you; and tho' you must confess, that there is a God in whom you move, live, and have your Being, both as to Soul and Body; yet you do not Worship him as God; but give that Adoration, due to him alone who created the World, and breathed into our Nostrils the Breath of Life, to insignificant Images of Wood or Stone, the Works of your own Hands; and lead Lives of Contention, Hatred, and Strife, practising the Abominable Art of Witchcraft; consulting Wizards and Enchanters, who pretend to see within the Veil of future Contingencies, and to foretel things to come. You your selves, convinc'd in Conscience, can bear Testimony to the Truth of all that I have said.

Whereupon, One from among the Multitude, answer'd me, and said, Sir, all that you say in relation to us, is very true; but I think, we are not to be blam'd upon this account; but rather God himself, who plac'd us in these miserable Circumstances, whence we can't extricate our selves without his Permission; and it has not pleas'd his Wisdom hitherto to make us more happy.

40 *The Fourth Conference,*

I answer'd, God certainly is no way necessary to criminal Proceedings ; For he created the first Man Holy, Just and Good, from whom you borrow your Original ; But the Devil, in Combination with Man's Free Will, usher'd in Sin and Disobedience into the World, which has entail'd Temporal and Eternal Miseries upon all his Children : But God being gracious and merciful, was not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the Knowledge of the Truth ; and, to that end, has given us his Word, wherein we are taught, how God created Man at first without Sin, according to his own Image ; and how that Man falling from the State wherein he was created, by sinning against God ; render'd himself obnoxious to Eternal Miseries, till his infinite Wisdom contriv'd Ways and Means to save Mankind, by sending his Son *Jesus Christ* in the World, cloathed with Humanity, to the end he might be a fit High Priest to offer up himself a Sacrifice acceptable to God for the Sins of all Mankind ; Therefore you can't say, that God has any hand in making you miserable : Your Destruction and Misery come of your selves ; therefore, without any delay, repent, and turn to the Lord your God ; for why should you be Vassals and Slaves to Sin and the Devil
any.

of the Condition of the Malabarians. 41

any longer, and render your selves obnoxious to the Displeasure of an injur'd God through all the Durations of Eternity?

Another answer'd me, and said, all of us *Malabarians* are not such as you take us for; we have very holy Men among us, who lead very Exemplary Lives, disengag'd from all Earthly Ties and Obligations whatsoever.

To whom I made this answer; I am now directing my Discourse to you that stand in great need of Instruction, to the end you may extricate your selves from the dangerous Circumstances that your Sins have entangled you in; 'tis of no use to you, that other Men are Saints, when you know your selves to be great and impenitent Sinners: Every one of you must be holy and disengag'd from this World, if you truly desire Happiness and the Favour of God.

A *Third* spoke; We thank you, Sir, for your wholesome Instructions; and desire you to continue your Discourse, giving us leave sometimes to object against such Expressions, as we can't without your farther Explication, approve of.

Sirs,

42 *The Fourth Conference;*

Sirs, said I, you are very welcome to make any Objections against what I shall say; for Doubting and Scrupling is a Sign of an Inquisitive Lover of Truth, that will take nothing upon Hear says; but will weigh the things himself in the Balance of his own Reason; and this will be very useful to me in the Progress of my Discourse: For you'll give a Handle to talk of things which otherwise I should imprudently pass by.

Well then, said he, what makes you walk abroad among us, and upbraid us with our Imperfections, while your own Disciples at home are not any better themselves? Pray Sir, wou'd not you do better to exert your Charity first at home, and Convert the Christians from the Wickedness of their Ways, and then to come and Convert us.

I heartily confess, reply'd I, that many Christians are worse than your selves, and want as much to be urg'd to repent, and turn to God even with Fasting; and I humbly conceive, you are Conscious of what we do with regard to those unhappy Men; we Preach to them in Season, and out of Season, to leave their wicked Ways, and
while

of the Condition of the Malabarians. 43

while 'tis called to day, to make their Calling and Election sure, lest to morrow there may be no place left for Repentance; and if they continue in their Disobedience, the fault lies at their own doors: For we have no Orders from the Word of God to force any Man to be happy against his Will: And if we did delay Preaching the Gospel to you Heathens, till such time as all the Professors of Christianity are become truly Good and Pious, there wou'd be no hopes of Converting the *Gentiles* to the Obedience of Christ; Therefore you must not judge of the Doctrine of Christ by some of his *Nominal* Disciples; but accept joyfully the same glad Tidings of Salvation, and endeavour not only to be better than the worst, but, to emulate, and to surpass the best of Christians: For the Promise is to you and to your Children, as well as to other Nations; and 'tis upon your account chiefly that I came to these Countries in hopes that you'll embrace the glad Tidings of Salvation, which some Professors of the Gospel despise, and cast the Holy Precepts thereof behind their Backs. And tho' they are baptiz'd *Christians*; yet in truth, they are worse than *Heathens*. But let not their wicked Lives discourage you from giving Obedience to
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44 *The Fourth Conference,*

the Heavenly Voice, lest you aggravate your Guilt, as those wicked *Christians* of whom you speak, apparently do.

Then a Woman answer'd ; Pray, why do you talk so much against our Divine Worship ; for most of you *Christians* approve of our Religion ; and I have seen Men and Women of your Persuasion frequenting our *Pagods*, and beholding with great satisfaction all our Religious Performances ; which certainly, they had not done, if they did not approve of our Religion.

To whom I answer'd, what is transacted in your *Pagods*, is more *Comical* than *Religious* ; and therefore our Debauchees and loose *Christians* (of whom we have said already, that they are worse than Infidels) frequent your *Pagods* to divert themselves with those Theatrical Ceremonies of your Worship : But as for sober *Christians*, they never frequent your Temples, nor assist at any of your extravagant Ceremonies ; but weep in secret because of the Blindness of your Minds, praying Almighty God on your behalf, that you may be delivered from under the power of Darkness and Ignorance, to enjoy the
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of the Condition of the Malabarians; 45
Glorious Privileges of the Children of
God.

Thus I concluded my Discourse recom-
mending them to the Protection of Al-
mighty God.

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of the Condition of the Malabarians 45
Glorious Privileges of the Children of
God.

Thus I concluded my Discourse recom-
mending them to the Protection of Al-
mighty God.

To which I added a short Prayer
for the Success of the Missionary
Company, and the Prosperity of the
Church in Malabar. I then read
the 100th Psalm, and the 101st
Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew.
I then read the 102nd Psalm, and the
103rd Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew.
I then read the 104th Psalm, and the
105th Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew.

Conference V.

About the Difficulty of a Rich Man's entering into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Between some of the principal Inhabitants, both *Heathens*, and *Mabometans*, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Seventeenth of December 1707, I was visited by two very Considerable and Principal Men; the one a *Heathen*, and the other a *Mabometan*, accompany'd with many Men of both Persuasions; I receiv'd them kindly with some Sweet-meats and *Bethel-Areck* (Sweet

(Sweet Incense) and then address'd my self to them in these Words :

You know, Sirs, that I am a Minister of *Jesus Christ* sent here to Preach his Everlasting Gospel, that you may know the Way of Salvation : Therefore I could wish that you your selves would put me upon some edifying Discourse, and hear me patiently, while I am handling any Subject which you think may be proper for the Salvation of your Souls.

They answer'd, we come here with no other View, but that we may hear some Edifying Discourse.

Then I said, Hitherto the Gospel has been preached only to the poorer sort among you ; for the Rich and Great Men among you despise the Gospel of Christ, to their own utter Destruction ; as they did in the time when the Christ and his Apostles lived on the Earth ; few of the Rich, few of the Mighty, and of the Learned Men of the Age believed in him ; but to the Poor the Gospel was Preached with Success : For they being disengag'd in a great measure, from the Snares and Deceitfulness of Riches, were attentive to the gracious Words that proceeded out of Christ's

of a Rich Man's entring into Heaven. 49

Christ's Mouth, and became his truest Disciples ; while himself told the Rich to their Faces, that 'tis as difficult for a Camel to pass through the Eye of a Needle, as for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven : For they commonly trust in their uncertain Riches, and not in the living God, who giveth all things necessary both to Life and Godliness.

Then one of them reply'd, God created the Rich and the Poor, and Wills that all Ranks and Degrees of Men should Worship him in Sincerity and Truth ; but now we live in the Dregs of Time, when all things run in a wrong Channel, as our Prophets have foretold us that it should be, as indeed we find it is : For we find different Religions, different Laws, different Languages, different Opinions, different Ceremonies, different Ways of doing Penance for Sin ; and, if I may so say, every thing is acted by some opposite jarring Principle, and is the Reverse of what it should be : And as long as God permits all this Confusion, what have we to say to the contrary ?

I answer'd, If you wou'd deliver yourselves from this Universal Confusion, repent of your Sins ; for you confess, that Men do not act as they should do ; is it

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50 *The Fifth Conference;*

not then your Duty to meditate upon Ways and Means to save your own Souls from the impending Ruin, that threatens a perverse and crooked Generation? For you are certainly convinc'd in your Conscience, that you can't live and die happily in this confus'd and dangerous State, that the generality of Mankind is now in.

We believe, said he, that the Wicked shall be punished according to his Wickedness, and that every one shall be rewarded according to his Works, whether they be Good, or whether they be Evil; tho' we believe also that God will not punish us for not being so holy and vers'd in Books as you are; for we are engag'd in the Affairs of this World, to the end we may gain daily Bread for our selves and Families; but your chief and only Employment is to meditate on the Works of the Almighty, and read Books of Devotion, and confer together about the Practice of Piety: For if we could live up to what is preach'd, there wou'd be no need of Preaching, no need of *Bramans*, and of many other Orders of *Priests* and *Hermits*, who are maintain'd with no small Charges to the Publick; and, pray, why are they maintain'd? But that they may reconcile

of a Rich Man's entring into Heaven. §1

tis to God, when we have committed some heinous Offences ?

I reply'd, what you offer here against the Necessity of Repentance, is groundless and frivolous, and argues, that you are far from the Kingdom of God ; for tho' God has ordain'd several Employments and Callings in the World ; yet this is the great Employment enjoyn'd on all, Men and Women, Young and Old, Rich and Poor, *viz.* to repent, and turn to God with all their Hearts, leading exemplary Lives in all Godliness and Honesty ; consisting, not in reading Books and going to Church, as a Priest ; but in emulating the best of Priests in the Exercise of a good Conscience both towards God and towards Men. The Fundamental necessary Truths to Salvation are few, and may be learnt in a little time, from any experienc'd Priest, or from any other Child of God that has Experience of God's Dealings with the Souls of Men ; but if one has no Inclination to leave the World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, then he may frequent the Temple as often as he pleases, and as frequently consult *Priests* and *Anchorets* ; but he will be still as great a Stranger to God and Godliness, as if he never had seen a *Pagod*, nor conversed with a Priest all his Life. I confess, the Priest-

52 *The Fifth Conference,*

hood is a great Blessing ; for the Priests Lips should preserve Knowledge, and we should enquire for the Law at their Mouths ; for with them are intrusted the Oracles of God : But your *Bramans* are no Priests of the Living God, but Ministers of dumb Idols, which can't help you in time of need.

But, above all things, pray don't harbour such a mean and despicable Opinion of the Priests, as if they were of no other use but to absolve you from your former Sins, to the end you may the more chearfully proceed in your old Trade of Sinning: If this were the great use of Priests, we might live as happily without them.

To this they made no other Answer, but that I had great reason to thank God, who had given me a sound Understanding ; and seeing it had not pleas'd God to endue them with the same high Degrees of Knowledge, they thought they were not requir'd to return me any Answer.

I said, Repentance doth not so much require a learned Head, as a sincere, honest Heart ; and if you would understand the Things of God, pray earnestly unto the Fountain of all saving Wisdom, and he will enlighten your Minds with the Knowledge
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of a Rich Man's entring into Heaven. 33

of himself, and anoint your Eyes with Eye-salve that you may see the Beauty of Holiness.

They reply'd, Had you read our *Malabarian* Books, you would have entertain'd another-guise Opinion of our Religion.

Very well, said I, If upon this Condition you promise Amendment of Life, and Obedience to the Word of God, favour me with the best of your *Malabarian* Writings, and I assure you, I will peruse them with all due application.

They answer'd, Yes, that we promise to do with all our Hearts.

Then I call'd for a *Malabarian* Clerk, who wrote out a Catalogue of the best Books extant in their Language, and laid it before them ; but they said, they had but very few of those Books in their own possession ; tho' they did not question but the *Bramans* and other Priests would find out those Books ; but they are such Writings, that are not to be understood, unless the Authors themselves wou'd rise from the dead, and be pleas'd to be their own Interpreters.

54 *The Fifth Conference, &c.*

That's no matter, said I, do you but procure me the Books, and you shall be paid for them, or I'll get them written out.

This they promised to do, and retir'd.

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Conference VI.

Containing several Particulars, &c.

Between a Malabarian Heathen, accompany'd with several others ; and a Danish Missionary.

ON the First of *January* 1708, I was visited by a Venerable old *Malabarian*, accompanied with many others of his Friends to wish me a happy new Year ; addressing himself to me in these Words :

I wish you all manner of Health and Prosperity this Instant new Year ; I wish you may continue labouring, but lose no Strength ;

and that you may be an old Man, but that your Vigour may remain; and that you may be great, and happy, and obtain all what you your self can hope to Enjoy.

I returned the same Compliment, and said, I wish you in like manner, a happy new Year: May the gracious God that made you, and sent me to this Country, to offer you the Terms of Salvation, make this Year a Year of *Jubilee* unto you, by giving you Repentance unto Life, accompany'd with a lively Faith in his Son Jesus Christ! May the great God destroy, and root out Idolatry from your Hearts and Temples! May his Kingdom come into your Hearts with Power, and that of the Devil and Darkness be weaken'd more and more; that the *Messias* may become, not only the King of the *Jews* and *Christians*, but also the King of all the Nations of the World.

Having concluded our mutual good Wishes, we sat down; and I asking them if they had understood the substance of what I had spoken, they answer'd, yes; and that they were very much oblig'd to me for my friendly Wishes.

I reply'd, 'tis then you'll have just Reasons to be thankful, when, repenting of your Sins, you return to the Lord your God, and Worship him only, who has made the World and all that therein is.

Then, asking me, Wherein consists true Repentance? I answer'd, it does not consist in changing your *Names*, or in changing your *Pagods* for our Churches; but it consists in the thorough Change and Renovation of your Minds, in ceasing to do Evil, and following that which is Good; so that you become new Creatures, endued with new Desires and Affections, crucifying the old Man, with all the Lusts thereof. And when this glorious Change is wrought in your inward Man, you'll chearfully and willingly change your outward Behaviour; you'll leave Idolatry and Heathenish Delusions, you'll desire to be baptiz'd in the Name of the Lord Jesus; you'll frequent the Congregations of the Faithful, and covet to be made Partakers of all the Privileges of Christ's true Disciples: And we can't till then allow you to be truly penitent, and rightly proselyted to our Religion.

All this, said they, is divinely spoken ; but pray, tell us, if all Christians are really such holy Men as you would have us be.

To this I answer'd, all Christians at their Baptism enter into a very Solemn Covenant with the Glorious, *Trinune* God, to renounce the Flesh, and the Devil, and all the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World ; and on the contrary, they swear to take God the *Father* for their Lord and King ; *Jesus* Christ his only begotten Son, for their Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit of God for their Sanctifier, to fear, to love, and obey God all the Days of their Lives ; and by vertue of this Baptismal Covenant, they are acceptable to God in his beloved Son : But we must confess, with Grief and Shame, that very few of them study to observe what they have Solemnly vow'd to keep in their Baptism ; but suffer themselves to be drawn away, and deluded by their deadly Enemies the Flesh, the World and the Devil, to the scandal of our holy Religion, and to the Hardening of Heathen Nations in their Infidelity.

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All what you say is very right, said they ; but, before we leave an old Object, in order to embrace a new one, 'tis but reasonable that you shew the Old to be very bad, or the New one to be much better ; this is easily applicable to the Subject Matter of our Discourse.

I willingly comply, said I, to your Demands ; for they are highly reasonable and easie to be demonstrated : For your present Circumstances are miserable and dangerous, having no Knowledge of Spiritual Things, plung'd in the Mire of sensual Employments, without Hope, and without God in the World. This is the State and dangerous Condition that we urge you to leave forthwith, and to change it for one more Glorious and Excellent, accompanied with all the Advantages that the Rational Creature is capable of ; I mean, a State of Grace and Reconciliation ; God pardoning all your Sins, for the Sake of *Jesus Christ*, and strengthening you for the future to quench the Lusts of the Flesh, and all the fiery Darts of the Devil ; and to live in Heaven, and converse with Angels, and with the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, while you have your Commoration here on Earth. I think, there is no need of further Proof, to shew
that

60 *The Sixth Conference,*

that this State and Condition is in it self as Eligible as the other is Miserable, and to be shun'd by all that have not put out the Eye of Reason, and are not desperately driven on by Passions, suffering the Brute to rule, and not the Man.

To this they answer'd, As to what is Morally Evil, 'tis agreed on all hands that 'tis to be avoided; but it does not yet appear, why we should leave our Religion and the Temples of our Gods, till you make out the Matter more clearly: But enough of this at present; we must go to Complement some other Friends upon this New-Years-day.

I ask'd them, What will your wishing a good new Year to your Friends signifie, when you your selves continue in your *old* miserable Course of living? Change your Course, and lead a new Life, and then this will be a blessed Year to you, and to as many of your Friends as will follow you in these Generous Resolutions; But if you stop your Ears to my Exhortations, it may be, you may die in your Sins, and never see another new Year; or if you do, you may not meet with this kind Invitation of Heaven to repent and believe the Gospel.

They

They answer'd, All comes to pass according to the Will of God.

Pray, said I, consider again and again, that 'tis the revealed Will of God that you should repent, and leave your Idolatry, lest you be given up to Hardness of Heart, as a Punishment of your Unbelief.

They thank'd me for my Friendly Admonitions, and bid me Farewel,

Con.

Continuing from the previous page.

...the Lord's will, and I am content to follow
...to the will of God.

...I, content again and again
...that the Father of God is your
...and I am your Father, I
...you given up to the will of Him, as a
...of your Father.

...I am your Father, I
...and I am your Father, I
...and I am your Father, I

...and I am your Father, I
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Conference VII.

Of Regeneration, and no Salvation out of Christ.

Between a *Mahometan* Priest and one of the *Danish* Missionaries:

TH E Twenty third of *January* 1708, a *Mahometan* Priest from *Negapatnum*, favour'd me with a Visit, accompany'd with some others, both *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, whom I receiv'd very kindly, asking the Priest, if among his Congregation in *Negapatnum* he had many sober and serious Men?

No

No, said he; For 'tis a great Rarity now a-days, to meet with an honest Man among either *Christians, Pagans* or *Mahometans*.

True, said I, 'tis the common Complaints, that Vertue and Piety are in a very declining Condition in all Parts of the World; and that very few do seek after God and Religion as to the Life and Power thereof; and yet alas, the Number of those that concern themselves in redressing this great Evil, and in reforming the World, is much smaller. You are a Priest in your, and I am a Priest in my Religion; should not we, each one of us in his respective District, exert and quit our selves like Men, making all the Efforts possible to support the Ruins of Piety, and endeavour to restore true Religion to its Primitive Beauteous Simplicity?

'Tis certainly our Duty so to do, answer'd he; but what can a few do among whole Shoals, and a World of Unbelievers?

Yes;

Yes, said I, a few Hands and Hearts, (assisted and influenced by Omnipotency) may do Wonders ; but those few, before they pretend to convert others, shou'd first adjust their own Accompts with God, and be themselves, Men truly fearing God, and hating Covetousness ; well versed and powerful in the Scriptures, that they may be fit to teach and exhort the Ignorant, comfort the Faint hearted ; and, when need requires, convince the Gainayers : We must begin, continue, and finish our Work in the Strength of the Almighty ; not esteeming our own Lives dear, if so be we are call'd forth to lay them down on the Account of Truth and Religion : If a few Men thus qualified, were resolv'd to use their best Endeavours with Intrepidity and Greatness of Mind, God would make their Way easie, furnish the necessary Means, and remove all the seeming Difficulties, which render the Enterprize impossible to those that are not provided with the whole Armour of God ; which is absolutely necessary in this Spiritual Warfare.

He look'd me earnestly in the Face, and said, I could not believe hitherto what I heard spoken to your advantage ; but now, blest with your Presence, and hearing you

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dis.

discourse of the Magnificent Things of God, I freely confels, I never heard a *Christian* talk as you do.

Sir, said I, if you see or hear any thing that is to be approved of, you are to ascribe it to the free Grace of God which has directed me to these Parts, to make known unto you the Doctrine of the Gospel, which can render you *wise unto Salvation*; and wiser than your Teachers.

But Sir, said he, do you mean, that the same Graces and Gifts are not to be had in our Way of Worship?

Not, said I; For out of Christ there is no Salvation: There may be found among *Turks* and *Heathens*, Men of excellent Natural Parts; but for all that, it may be, they are the worst of Mortals, as to their Morals; But however, as for the saving Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of God, these are the *Peculium* or Property of Christ's Disciples; and are absolutely beyond the Sphere of Nature's Activity.

What, said he, do you then put no Difference between us *Mahometans* and the *Heathens*?

I ac-

I acknowledge, Sir, said I, that the *Mahometans* worship one God only, and some read the Old and New Testament; and upon this account we esteem you very highly; and make a great difference between the Two Sects; but as to the *main Points* relating to *true Holiness* and *Justification* of a Sinner before God, we Judge, that you run parallel in erroneous Absurdities, and your Opinions to be equally dangerous; because all of you rely upon your own Merit and good Works, exclusive of the Grace of God; which Grace is the Beginner, Promoter, and Finisher, of our Salvation, and without which we can't so much as think a good Thought, or do any Work acceptable to God: Don't deceive your selves therefore; and think you are the Darlings of Heaven, because you are preferable to the Heathens in several Points, while you want that *One Thing* necessary, *viz.* the Knowledge of your *Misery*, and the Knowledge of a *Saviour* to deliver you from the Wrath to come. I find by sad Experience, that the Advantages you have over the Heathens, do but render you more untractable: For their Errors are so gross, that they are easily made manifest to themselves; but your Errors are something more subtile, and your selves Prouder and more Obstinate.

I have nothing to say against what you assert, said he; for 'tis really so: And as for my self, I labour under Doubts and Scruples about my own Religion; and my Soul is griev'd at the unsanctify'd Lives of the *Mahometans*; But, pray tell me your Opinion freely of our *Mahomet*.

When I well examine, reply'd I, what your own Writers have left upon Record of the Religion and Manners of *Mahomet*, I cannot but conclude that he was a great Enemy to God and Piety: This I can make out to your Conviction, by alledging several Passages of the History of *Mahomet*: But lest you should say that we *Christians* have no Authentick Records relating to your Prophet, I'll hear you patiently relate his History, and make my Reflections upon every Paragraph as you go on.

This, said he, we shall adjourn to another time; For to repeat all the History of our Prophet, wou'd require a great deal of time; so that there wou'd be no Moments left for your Reflections, nor for my Answers: And besides, I don't approve of all the Passages therein contain'd.

Sir,

Sir, said I, if you don't approve of this Scheme, I will propose another ; in the Prosecution of which I'll make it evident, that *Mahomet* was a false Prophet, and an Impostor, sent into the World, not to save Mankind, but to be a Scourge unto them for their neglecting the Gospel of *Christ*, that had been Preach'd in all the Countries where now *Mahomet's* Dreams and *Reveries* are impos'd upon the unthinking Croud ; But, go home dear Sir, for this time, and pray earnestly to the great God to guide you to make a Right Choice ; and to the End you may do this with Success, pray, make your own Reflection upon the Life of *Mahomet*, and upon that of *Jesus Christ* ; and then refresh your Memory with what has pass'd between us at this time, and compare it with what is usually taught by your Doctors. If you take this Course, you'll quickly come to perceive the Falseness of *Mahomet's* Doctrine ; and if you please to favour me with another Visit, or with a Letter, acquainting me with your Circumstances, I'll give you such farther Instructions, or send you such Books, that will put our Christian Religion in the clearest Light, and that you may see it, as it were with one View ; which will put you in a Capacity of helping and assisting your Brethren.

He said, I am overjoy'd to have made Acquaintance with you: But now, in the presence of so many, I don't think it proper to talk more upon this Head; But I'll take another Opportunity to discuss these Matters more narrowly.

Sir, said I, be not asham'd, because these poor Men are present: For I don't question, but they would be as willing to hear these things enquir'd into, and examin'd, as your self.

They answer'd all together, 'Tis true, we have heard strange Things to day; yet for all this, we must confess, that we heard you with some satisfaction; and you have the Freedom of speaking, and we of approving what we please.

I answer'd, The Truth never makes use of *violent* Means to force its Way into the Bosoms of Men; but carries Strength and Efficacy along with it, and shines upon the Understanding with such powerful Light, and surprizes the Conscience with such strange Convictions, that Men do necessarily, and yet very willingly give their Assent to all its Assertions: And I hope, it will be so with you: For tho' you seem to make
light

light of the great Truths that have been propos'd unto you ; yet in time of Affliction, they may revive again, and exert themselves in your Souls.

Hereupon they all took their leaves of me, promising to visit me another time.

I recommended them to the Grace of God, and told 'em, that I entertain'd great Hopes of their Conversion to the Faith of Christ.

The Priest answer'd me, and said, A Christian well grounded in his Religion, will live and die a *Christian* ; and so will a *Mahometan* continue the same.

I told him, that neither *Christians* nor *Mahometans*, can repent of their Sins, and return to God, without the special Grace of Christ ; however well vers'd they may be in the Principles of their respective Religions. Therefore, said I, pray that you may be made Partakers of this Grace of God through Jesus Christ, that you may inherit Eternal Life.

He thank'd me heartily, asking me, if I had any Commands for *Nagapatnam*.

Nothing else, said I, but that you greet all *Malabarians* and *Moors* at *Nagapatnam* in my Name, telling 'em, that they want all and every one of them, to repent and believe the Gospel of Christ, that they may be saved; and withal, I desire you to procure me an *Alcoran* in the *Malabarian* Language; and in so doing you'll oblige me highly.

He told me, that the *Alcoran* was not Translated into the *Malabarian* Language; but if I would give Encouragement for such an Undertaking, he would get it Translated for me; but it cou'd not be done without Money.

Sir, said I, if you believe your *Alcoran* to be the Word of the Living God, you should rejoice that Christians enquire after it; and you should get it translated, and send me a Copy; for which I will send you Excellent Writings containing the Doctrine of Jesus.

This he promised to do, and withdrew.

I re-

I receiv'd, since, a Letter from him touching this Matter; to which I made a long Answer containing a short Account of the chief Principles of the *Christian Faith*, with a Confutation of *Mahometanism*; to to which hitherto he has made no Return.

*Of the Means of Salvation:
as of Repentance, and of
many other Particulars.*

Con-

I received, since, a Letter from him touching this Matter: to which I made a long Answer containing a short Account of the chief Principles of the Christian Faith, with a Confutation of Mahometanism; to which Answer he has made no Reply.

For the first of July 1711.

For the second of July 1711.

For the third of July 1711.

Conference VIII.

*Of the Way of Salvation;
of Repentance, and of
many other Particulars.*

Between some *Malabarian* School-Boys, and others, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Thirty First of January 1708, I walk'd out with my *Malabarian* Clerk; and meeting many of the Heathens in my Way, I took the Opportunity to talk to 'em of the Way of Salvation; addressing my self to 'em in these or the like Terms; See how we walk all together in

in the same Way, and know not whether it leads; should not this Consideration awaken your Desires to enquire into what Way leads to Eternal Happiness, and whether you are walking in that Way or not?

Yes, said they, that would be a very useful Consideration for every one of us.

Do you know, said I, if your Souls are in the Way that leads to Eternal Life, or not.

No, indeed we do not, said they; for how should we know, when we have no Teacher to direct our Course? To whom shall we apply our selves for Instructions? If we go to our Priests and consult them upon this weighty Point, we can have no other Answer, than this; Make large Presents, and bring your Offerings to the *Pagods* as often as you can, and live in Peace with all Men: This is all we can learn of them.

I fear, said I, you are not in earnest in quest of Salvation; for otherwise you would not consult such interested impudent Priests, nor their Idols; but you would apply your selves to honest Men that are able and willing

of the Way of Salvation, &c. 77

ling to teach you the right Way, without Money and without Price.

Sir, said they, who would not be happy upon such easie Terms ?

I reply'd, Wishings and Wouldings will not make you happy; you must bestir your selves, and take pains to learn the Way: For who will undertake to go to any place, but does first inform himself of the Road leading thither, and never will be at rest till he can get all the necessary Directions for the Journey? Otherwise Men will judge, that he is not really bound for such a Place, nor ever designs the Undertaking such a Journey.

If we live, said they, as our Fathers did before us, and all our other Neighbours round about us, what should hurt us? Why, can't we be saved?

No, said I, you must not follow the Multitude to do Evil; for that *broad Way* leads to Ruin and Destruction.

If we do Good and eschew Evil, can't we then be happy, said they?

As

As long, said I, as you remain in the State and Condition you are now in, 'tis impossible for you either to do Good, or to eschew Evil.

How can that be, said they?

You must, said I, have a sound Knowledge of the sinful miserable Condition that you are now in, which makes you obnoxious to the Displeasure of Heaven, and the Objects of Almighty Vengeance: When once you arrive at this Knowledge of the dangerous Consequences of Sin, you'll try all Ways and Means to deliver your Souls from the approaching Dangers; but you'll find no safety in your stately *Pagods*; and your Priests and *Bramans* will be but Physicians of no Value, to heal a wounded Conscience: Then you'll conceive, that *Christ Jesus* is the only Physician of Souls, and that there is no other Mediator between offended God, and us offending Creatures, but the Man *Christ Jesus*: 'Tis he only hath redeem'd both you and us, paying the Price of our Redemption with his own *precious Blood* upon the cursed Tree of the Cross, according to the Prophecies that foretold, many Hundred Years before, his Birth and all the minute Circumstances of his Life, Death and

and Resurrection. After the foresaid Knowledge of your Sin and Misery, you must know this Great Redeemer, whose Merits and Sufferings are accounted yours, if you believe in his Name and lead Lives becoming his holy Gospel, which contains the Doctrine and Sufferings of our Saviour: And, if you wou'd be his Disciples, you must *take up your Cross*, and follow him; must suffer Reproaches and Persecution for his sake, and be counted Fools, in Order to be truly Wise: And therefore 'tis, that the Way to eternal Life is said to be *Streight* and very narrow, and *few there be that find it.*

What do you say, Friends, to these Things?

They said, we never heard such things in all our Lives; and what to say to you, we can't tell.

But you'll know what to answer, said I, after you have walk'd in this *narrow Way*; and then you'll Experience the many Difficulties that holy Men must meet with in the Progress thro' this Wilderness-World, towards a better and more lasting Life.

Good

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Good Sir, said they, we are ignorant People, and can't dispute with you about such Speculative Niceties.

I answer'd, This Matter requires no speculative Genius, but Sincerity of Heart, to examine the State of your own Minds, to the End you may be assur'd that the great Work of Repentance is begun and perfected in your Souls; without which you must Everlastingly perish.

Sir, said they, you are very desirous to Profelyte us to your Religion; but we are taught from our Youth, and appriz'd from good Hands, that the Christian Religion is the worst of all Religions; tho' upon our own Experience, we know but little, either of the Vertues or the Vices of Christians. If what is reported of their wicked Lives, and of the Strictness and Narrowness of the Way to Heaven, (of which you have been just now Discoursing) be true, we have Reasons to fear that few Christians will ever come to Heaven: For they commit such Abominations, that our polluted Eyes cannot behold them without Horror, nor willingly Converse with them: And how much more will the Holy Eyes of God abhor their Impieties, and barr them his Everlasting Presence

sence? We act freely with you, and tell our present Sentiments and Opinion of the *Christian Scheme*; but we hope this our Freedom will neither offend you, nor discourage you from resuming the Thread of your Discourse, and pursuing your first Intention.

I reply'd, I am no way offended at what you offer against our Religion; for you judge of the Christian Doctrine, by the wicked Lives of some of its Professors; whereas you should examine the Nature and prime Intention of the Doctrine it self; which is to prescribe most Holy and Just Laws to Mankind, marking out to them the Way and Means of Reconciliation with God, and of attaining Everlasting Happiness: For why should a Pious King, and excellent Ruler and Legislator be blam'd, because of some few *Rebels* and *Felons* who transgress his just Laws by Disobedience and Obstinacy? But if you would know the true Genius and Excellency of *Christianity*, come to me, who am a Minister of the Gospel, and I will teach you out of the Word of God, the Sum and Substance of what we Christians are taught to believe and practise; and then blame it if you please: But if you do obstinately refuse to be Instructed, and reject the offers of Grace and Mercy that God makes

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to you this Day through my Ministry, you'll certainly be condemned at the great Assize, for your wilful and obstinate Refusal of the Tenders of Salvation. And as for the pretended Offence given you by the Lives of some Christians, they, without doubt, are the *Enemies of the Cross of Christ*; and the Extremity of Pains and Torments is reserv'd for them among God's Enemies.

There are some among us, said they, that keep themselves disengag'd from any particular Sect whatsoever, and from symbolizing with any Set of Religious Ceremonies, and Temple-Worship, contenting themselves to adore, revere and love, with humble Minds and ardent Affections, the Great Creator of the Universe.

I know this to be a current Opinion among some of your Doctors, said I, Especially, in the Writings of *Dirwallwer* and *Tschewawakkium*; both which Authors have written incomparably well of the Absurdities of the *Pagod-worship*, of your gross Idolatry, and of the Vanity of all transitory Enjoyments; laying down fine Rules for walking in the fair Paths of Vertue; and of making further Progress in the practical Knowledge of sound Wisdom; But in all their learned Writings, they give you not the least Hint,

of the Way of Salvation, &c. 83

or Account of the *Original* of *Sin* and *Misery*; without which Knowledge, all the Arts and Sciences are but insignificant, empty Speculations, and vain Wisdom of great sounding Words, that will never enable us to do any one vertuous Action, truly acceptable to God: For this is the first Truth necessary to be learnt by every one that would be happy in the Enjoyment of God, *viz.* that he is an *Enemy to God by Nature*, and born a Child of Wrath and Hell, as well as others; and must know *CHRIST* the Redeemer of Men; whereof these Authors were altogether ignorant, being not Instructed in the Inspir'd Writings of the Old and New Testament, which lay before us the Way to everlasting Life and Immortality, hid before; from the Wise Men of the World, who made fruitless Attempts to purchase Heaven with their own Money, and the Favour of God with their pretended meritorious Performances of Self-will Worship, to the seeming Mortification of the Flesh; but no way contributing to the Renewal of the inward Part, and changing of the Heart. Your *Brahmans* indeed, do boast, that they have a Law writ by God himself; in which his Will and Pleasure, in Relation to Mens Salvation, is clearly manifested; but in this they are great Impostors, abusing the credulous Ignorance of the People; for they never

can produce any such Law, and submit it to the impartial Perusal of learned Men.

Upon this, they said, they would talk of these matters another time ; but that they were now bound to take another Route.

Then I bid them adieu, charging them not to forget what had pass'd between us, in relation to the *Doctrine of Salvation*.

Thence I came to a House where Travellers and Strangers did rest and repose themselves, and wherein a School was kept for the Instruction of Youth ; where, after having rested a while, I apply'd my self to some of the Children, and ask'd them, who created them ? Some answer'd, they did not know ; and others said 'twas *T'schiwen* made them, who is the Almighty God, Creator of all Things.

I ask'd them, how come they to know that *T'schiwen* was God ?

Our Parents, said they, and School-Masters taught us.

I ask'd them, if they believ'd *T'schiwen* had a Body as Men and Women have ?

They

They said, Yes ; and Eats, and Drinks, Sleeps, and Walks, and has a Wife as other Men have.

I answer'd, My dear Children, You are grossly misinform'd about the Nature of the God that made you : For he has no Bodily Shape, no Flesh and Blood ; but is a pure immaterial Being that can't be liken'd to any thing that is either in Heaven or Earth ; and his Name is not *Tschuwen*, but *Saruwesuren* (God ;) he never had a Wife ; yet he had a Son before the World was made, God, blessed for ever, equal to the Father, begotten by a Generation, to all Mortals very incomprehensible. This Son of God was sent into the World to assume the Human Nature, to the end he might suffer and die for the Sins of all the World, and satisfy the Demands of infinite Justice, violated by rebellious Men ; his Name is *Jesus Christ* or the anointed Saviour ; because he saves his People from their Sins, by destroying the Devil's Sovereignty over them, and bringing them to the Knowledge of the God that made them, and enabling them by his Spirit to live holy Lives, worthy of his glorious Gospel in all Godliness and Honesty ; and therefore, my dear Children, this is the God that you must know ; and to that end,

you must suffer your selves to be guided and instructed by his holy Laws, comprehending all the great Truths necessary to be learnt, in order to attain everlasting Happiness.

They reply'd, Our Business is to learn to read and write ; and our School-master never taught us any such abstruse Notions.

Then directing my Discourse to the Master, I wonder, Sir, said I, that you don't instruct these Children in the Knowledge of God and Godliness.

My chief Business, said he, is to teach them to read, write, cast Accompts, and to give them some small Taste of the Art of *Poesie* ; but as for these things you mention, they shall study them hereafter, when they come to riper Years.

This, said I, is the fittest time to season the Minds of Children with the saving Knowledge of God and Religion : For they are not yet prejudiced in favour of Vice ; and therefore they are prone, and as it were, inclin'd to fall in Love with Vertue, if you do but expose her before their Eyes in all the Perfections of her excellent Beauties ; and the

the chief reason why we find so many Ignorant old Men every where, is, because they are not instructed in their Youth: And whence comes all this unpardonable Supineness and Negligence, but from the gross Ignorance of you School-masters, who know nothing to instruct Children in, but the fabulous Stories of your false lying Gods? But, as for the true God, you are as ignorant of his Nature, as you are disobedient to all the Rules of moral Vertue: For you make your Disciples seven times the Children of Perdition more than they were before, by your loose Lives and corrupt Manners; for which you should be ashamed: Repent therefore, and turn to the God that made you, to the end you may be capable of Instructing these Children in the Nuture and Admonition of the Lord.

He held his Peace, and answer'd not a Word; Whereupon there came in a *Dawatafchi*, or a Woman that serves in their Temple, and said to me, Pray, Sir, why do you propose such hard Questions to this poor ignorant Man? If you will consult about Abstrusities and puzzling Questions, go to our *Bramans*, whose Employment 'tis to talk about these abstracted Notions.

I answer'd, Those that are in a sound State, have no need of a Physician ; and those that are wise, need no teaching ; I come to instruct the Ignorant, and more especially such as confess their Ignorance of the Ways of God and Salvation : For this is the first step to the Attainment of Knowledge (*viz.*) an *Ingenuous Confession of our Ignorance* ; whereas your *Bramans*, whom you call *Wise* and *Knowing*, are the farthest of all, from the Kingdom of God ; because they think they are profoundly Wise in Matters of Religion, when they know nothing as they ought to know ; but are proud and vain, impatient, and incapable of Instruction : Wherefore I chuse to confer with the Ignorant and Unlearned, in order to teach them true Wisdom, which is capable to make them wise unto Salvation.

You talk a great deal of God, reply'd they, pray tell us seriously, have you ever seen him, or can you order matters so, that we may see him once ?

I reply'd, If my God was an Idol made of Wood or Stone, like those you worship in your *Pagods*, then I could easily shew him you, and comply with your extravagant Demand ; but the Creator of Heaven and Earth

Earth is not to be liken'd to any Creature whatsoever ; nor is he to be seen with bodily Eyes ; nor is he the Object of our External Senses ; but he is the Object of all *pious Minds*, to whom he discovers himself more and more by the Revelations he makes of himself thro' the kindly Suggestions of his Holy Spirit ; but hides his Face from all such who run after Graven Images, and gives them up to a reprobate Mind, to believe a Lye and vain Dreams.

Then stood up another Woman, and said, Sir, You are very much in the right ; and what you say of our *Pagod* Worship, and of its Ministers, is but too true : For this very Woman that talks with you, is devoted to the Service of the *Pagod*, and lives all the while a scandalous Life ; and 'tis notorious, that she has had Three Bastard-Children.

I reply'd, The Reasons why all your Religious Women who assist at the Performances of *Pagod* Ceremonies, are unexceptionably great *Whores*, is, their reading the Amorous Intrigues of your *Whoring* Gods and Goddesses ; which rationally induces them to believe, that 'tis their Duty to imitate all the Actions of their Gods : And, one should think, that this one Reflection, so obvious and true, should

should make you abhor the Thoughts of frequenting a *Pagod* for the future, where you know those false Gods have their Habitation, that are the Promoters of all Uncleanness and filthy Lusts.

And going thence to another Village, in my Way, I met several *Bramans*, and ask'd them, How long will you go on, Sirs, to delude the Ignorant People.

They reply'd, We have *venerable Antiquity* on our side; our Fathers professed this Religion, and so do we.

I reply'd, If your Fathers and Great Grandfathers were poor and necessitous, does it follow, that you must reflect Disparagement on their Memories, if you, with honest Industry, endeavour to enrich yourselves, and provide better for your Children than they did for you? And why should you think it any Reflection on your Ancestors, to surpass them in the Knowledge of God, seeing 'tis as evident that all of them were grossly Ignorant of Things relating to eternal Happiness, as some of them were poor and mean as to their outward Circumstances.

All

All this could not engage them to stay and discourse the Matter with me ; but all the Answer they made, was, that when they come to die, they desire to go to no better Place than where their Fathers are.

Thereupon I came back to the Inn, and found there many *Pilgrims*, who had, as they themselves told me, left House and Home, Wives and Children, and all they had in their own Country, in Obedience to the High Commands of their Angry Gods, who had enjoyn'd them a very long *Pilgrimage* ; who teach them, that all they possess, is none of their own ; that they are oblig'd to leave all, to please their angry Gods, and atone for past Offences.

But, answer'd I, How came you to know all this ; and that 'tis the Will of God that you should undergo such long Journeys, and do such severe tedious Penances.

We read, said they, how the Gods appear to such as abandon all they have for the love of them ; and how they bless their faithful *Votaries* with higher Degrees of Wisdom, and other distinguishing Marks of
of

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of their Favour and gracious Acceptance of their toilsome Pilgrimages.

I ask'd them, How long they had lead that Pilgrimage state of Life?

They reply'd, For this last Fourteen Years.

And did the God never appear to you in all this time, said I?

They answer'd, No, not once.

I ask'd them farther, Are you entertain'd wherever you come, with the Necessaries of Life? And are Men kind to you?

Not very kind, said they; for the World is not now so Charitable as it was wont to be towards poor Pilgrims.

Then I said to them, I wonder that you are able to undergo so many, and so great Austerities: For certainly, you enjoy but little of the Comforts of this Life; and I pity your miserable Condition so much the more, inasmuch as I am assur'd, you'll be as miserable in the Life to come, if you continue in this rambling Pilgrimage-state of Sin and Ignorance: For you have no
Know-

Knowledge of the true God ; but give that Honour and Worship, due to him only, to dumb Idols, and Images that are no Gods, but Instruments of Delusion employ'd by the Devil, the Enemy of Mankind, to make you deviate from the Ways of Truth ; and therefore you'll reap no Benefit from all these Bodily Exercises and Austerities of a long tedious Penance ; because they are not enjoin'd upon you by the true God ; but are a Free-Will offering which you make to the Idols and Images of your own Inventions and Making ; which is an Abomination to the true God, who will alone be worshipp'd *in Spirit and in Truth* ; and requires Repentance from dead Works, and from your former vain Conversation, by a thorough Change of the Heart, accompanied with an outward Carriage answerable to such a great Change wrought in your Souls by the Almighty Power of God. This is the Repentance requir'd of you ; but not foolishly to leave your native Country, your Wives and Children, and all that was dear and valuable unto you, without any Reason ; and to create your selves a great deal of unnecessary Troubles and Fatigues, and at the same time molest Strangers with your burthensome unwelcome Company : And, besides that this idle, wandring sort of Life, is sinful in it self, and gives occasion to com-
mit

mit all kind of Villanies, I know of no Advantage that you can reap from this long Pilgrimage, unless that it hath afforded you a fit Opportunity to be instructed by me at this time in the true Doctrine of Salvation, that you may renounce your Idolatrous Errors and Superstitions.

They ask'd me, Pray, Sir, who, and what are you ?

I am, said I, a Minister or Servant of the Living God, who created Heaven and Earth, sent to you to warn you to leave the Idols of your own making, and to turn to the Worship of the true God.

They answer'd, our Religion has never been called in question as to its Divine Original, and our Gods are true Gods.

I reply'd, 'Tis very true, that your Fathers have worshipped these dumb Idols for some thousands of Years ; but God, out of his Grace and Mercy, offers you these easie Terms of Salvation now, in the End of the World, whereof your Fathers were Ignorant.

Tis

'Tis true, answer'd one of them, we have a Prophecy firmly believ'd among us, that two great Prophets are to appear among us before the End of this World, in order to work a mighty Reformation among the People of *Malabar*.

I answer'd, Without consulting the written Prophecies of your own Laws, you may be easily convinc'd, that this is the time of your Visitation : God makes gracious Tenders unto you this Day, of the Pardon and Remission of all your Sins, if you do but accept of the same with a full Resolution to repent, and turn to the living God, leading new Lives becoming the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ.

One of them, who was an Ecclesiastick, said, Sir, I freely own the Errors of our Religion ; more especially, those relating to a *Plurality of Gods*, (tho' many strong Arguments are urg'd in favour of this Opinion ;) for I believe, that there is but *One* God, and that the *Idol-Worship* celebrated in the *Pagods*, is but useless Vanity.

I am glad that you are come so far, said I, as to believe in one God ; but you must not stop here : For you must likewise endeavour to know who this One God is, that you may pay him the Tribute of Adoration and Praises due to his most excellent Majesty ; and according to his own Will revealed to us in his holy Laws, in which I am very willing to instruct you, if you will but come to me, with a longing Desire of being instructed in the Things relating to the Salvation of your Souls.

Then a Woman interrupting me, cry'd out, Pray, Sir, who is your God ?

I answer'd, Your God and mine is but one and the same God ; and besides him there is none other ; we are the Works of his Hands ; he is not visible (as your wooden Gods or Images) to be shewn with the Finger, or to be seen with bodily Eyes, unless in the Works of the Creation ; wherein we may clearly see the Effects of his infinite Wisdom and Almighty Power, in creating this Visible World, and in disposing all the Parts thereof with so great Proportion and Regularity ; whence arises the excellent unspeakable Beauty of the whole. 'Tis from this Great God we borrow Life and the Continuation

tinuation of the same ; in him we *live*,
move, and *have our Beings* ; and do you
ask me where is your God ?

That is right, said another Woman,
for God is every where present ; and
he is actually present in this Tree,
tho' we have no Eyes to see him.

But, said I, if you'll repent, and leave
your Idolatry and Superstition, and suffer
your selves to be instructed in his holy
Laws, the Eyes of your Mind will be
open'd, that you may see God in his
Wisdom, Power and Goodness, in all
and every one of his Creatures ; but
more especially, *in your selves* : For holy
Men and Women are the *Temples of the
living God*, and the Places of his most
Gracious Residence : Seek him there, ac-
cording to the Directions I shall give you
out of his own Word, and you shall cer-
tainly find him, and enjoy him for
ever.

Thereupon they left me, and I returned
home ; and as I was near the City, a Mer-
chant call'd after me, asking if he might
propose to me some Questions.

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I answer'd, Yes, Sir, with all my Heart.

He ask'd me, What do you say to the Durations of the Pains and Torments of Hell? Are they to have an End, or are they endless and Everlasting.

I reply'd, They are certainly endless, and will endure for ever.

Is there no Redemption thence, added he?

No, said I.

But, Sir, how can this rationally be, said he, seeing that we live in this World but for few Years, and our sinful Actions are, as to their Duration, transitory; why then should the Punishment be Eternal? The necessary proportion attending distributive Justice, is not observ'd here.

But Friend, said I, The Sinner offending the infinite Justice of God, and refusing to accept of Grace and Mercy upon the easie Conditions of Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and Repentance towards God, while the Days of Grace, and the Time of Salvation

is

is not yet at an End, dies in his Sins, and continues to Sin on in Hell for ever; which: calls for Punishments answerably eternal: Therefore, if you would avoid the Eternity of Hell-Torments, repent now in time, upon which depends your Fate of being Everlastingly happy, or unhappy for ever, both as to the Soul and Body; which if Mortals did but seriously consider they would disengage themselves from all Earthly Ties and lead Lives worthy of the Divine Nature, to which they are so strictly related; and would have their Meditations in Heaven, whilst they have Commoration and Abode in this sinful World.

Upon this we came both into the City, and parted.

Conference IX.

Of the Nature and Properties of the Malabarian Gods ; and of the incumbent Duty every one is under to reclaim his Brethren from Idolatry, &c,

Between many *Bramans* and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Fifth of *March*, 1708, I undertook a Journey to *Dirukuddeur*, a very large City belonging to the King of *Tanjour*, adorned with beautiful Buildings ; especially with

three stately Temples, or *Pagods*, very near one to the other, all in a Line, with fine Approaches and Entrys to them on both Sides. Near these *Pagods*, the King of *Tanjour* has built a stately Palace, for his Reception when he comes a-pilgrimaging here. After I had seen the Town, I sat down in a Garden near the *Bramans* Inn, whither very many Priests and *Bramans* flock'd about me; whom I entertained with a Discourse about the Being and Attributes of God; to which they gave very great Attention: Then I distributed Twenty Five Sermons among them, which had been preach'd in our *Jerusalem-Church* at *Tranquebar*: Whereupon a greater Confluence of Heathens came to me, whom I heartily exhorted to seek after the True God that created all Things, and to study to know his Will, to the End they might be made happy in this, and in the next World; telling them, that if they did continue to worship Graven Images, that neither hear, see, nor understand, their Punishments would be certainly unavoidable and everlasting: But if you, said I, do this Day hear and obey his Voice, and own him, and his Son *Christ Jesus*, for your Lord and Saviour, he will prevent you with his Mercies, and pardon all your past Sins, enabling you to do what is acceptable and well-pleasing in his Sight.

Then

Then stood up a Venerable Old Man, and said, What you have said of God's Benefits towards us, and of our unthankfulness towards him, is all very true ; but that we have no True, but false Gods in our Country, this you are still to demonstrate : For tho' the *Christians* call us *Heathens*, we are not so in Reality ; but we are a very *Ancient Nation*, whose Religion is as *Old* as the World it self ; and many of our Gods have done great Miracles among us ; and more particularly, our God *Winsjagon*, who built us our great Temple, and dwelt in this Place among us.

I answer'd, about 1700 Years ago, the the *Europeans* were all *Heathens*, professing *Idolatry*, as you *Malabarians* do at this time ; but God was pleased to call them to the Profession of the Gospel of his Son *Jesus Christ* ; whereupon their Eyes were enlightened to see the Falseness of their own Religion, the Pious Cheats of their Cunning Priests, and the Vanity of all Idol-worship ; and they did forthwith renounce the Superstitions received from credulous Antiquity, and returned to the Living God, from whom their Fathers had departed, in the Pursuit of Fictions and Fables, the mere Inventions of wicked and designing Men : Therefore I

upbraid you with your Ignorance, nor reflect Disparagement upon your Country, because of the Natural Errors prevailing among you this Day : For my Countrymen have been for some Thousands of Years in the same miserable Condition : Nor do I at all wonder, that you are so tenacious of the erroneous Traditions of your Fathers : But if you will with Patience hear me declare unto you the Doctrine of the Holy Bible, you'll cast from you these Vain Idols, and worship the True God in sincerity of Mind : Nay, if you do but consult your own Reasons, you'll see they are but mere Vanity and Lies : For how can an understanding, reasoning Man, take a Piece of Wood or any other gross Matter, hewn into the Shape of a Swine, Fish, Tortoise, Horse, or into any other Four-Headed, Eight handed, Thee-ey'd monstrous Form, for his God ? Or be persuaded into a Belief, that the God whom he honours for the Object of his Adoration, is married, has many Children, committeth Adultery, Murder, Theft, and all the most execrable Villanies ; and has wag'd War for many hundred years with a neighbouring God, about mere *Punctilio's* of Honour and Precedence, commanding Men to exercise such Abominations as are not to be nam'd without Sin ; and at last some ravenous Beast ? As for example, your God *Wischtnu* has

has

has been several times Metamorphos'd in very many different monstrous Shapes ; *Biruma* had three Heads and eight Hands ; and *Isruen* had an Elephant's Snout.

Moreover, *Wischnu* had many Concubines, and metamorphos'd himself into a young Woman, to qualifie himself to commit Uncleanness with *Isuren* ; and many more such Atchievements are recorded of him, whereby he deluded many hundred of Women, who fell passionately in Love with his Beautiful Deporture and fine Mein.

Ruddireu, another of your Gods, is no less infamous for such wicked and violent Practices ; for once he forc'd a young Slave, that refus'd to comply with his lustful Desires ; and *Wischnu* deceiv'd *Mauel*, to the end he might dispossess him of the Government of the Universe : *Ruddireu*, *Wischnu*, and *Biruma*, quarrell'd together about Precedence ; whereupon *Ruddireu* Stabb'd *Wischnu*, and struck off *Biruma's* Head.

The God *Raschanidizen* ran raving Mad for a considerable time. *Ramen* and *Lethschenen* wag'd such bloody Wars with *Rawanen* as ended in the utter Destruction of all the Three Fighting Deities. Your God *Ischokkanaden* acted Sixty four Comedies in this Coun.

Countrey; *Wischtnu* is sleeping upon Serpents in a Sea of Milk; and *Pulleiar* is continually eating and drinking on a Milky Sea sweetned with the finest Sugar; *Isuren* is everlastingly Dancing.

These are the Atchivments of your Gods thro' whom you expect Eternal Happiness.

I wonder that you are not asham'd of these vile Practices of your Gods, which would render any Man (if guilty of the same Villanies) the Object of all honest Mens Scorn and just Hatred, who would cut him off with the Sword of Justice as unworthy to enjoy the Benefit of Human Society, or of walking upon God's Ground. Therefore repent without delay, lest you perish in your Sins.

Then the *Manikaren*, or the Governor of the Place, ask'd, whence have you this Account of our Gods? And how came you to know their several Names and Dignities.

Sir, answer'd I, by reading and perusing your Books; and therefore I offer nothing upon Hear-say.

Ano-

Another stood up, and said, Sir, You would have us believe you to be a very sanctified and holy Man; but give me leave to tell you, that it does not become an holy Man to *blaspheme* our Gods; for true Piety despises no Man upon Account of Religion; and 'tis therefore we *Malabarians* do neither condemn nor despise the Christians upon the Account of their Religion.

I answer'd, I neither censure nor despise any of you as to your Persons, or any thing that is commendable in your Religion; but I reasonably condemn your gross Ignorance, and your false Worship pay'd by you to *Non-entities* and Vanities honour'd with the Title of *Gods*; and therefore both out of Duty to the true God, and out of loving-kindness towards you, I can't but speak the things that belong to your eternal Happiness, tho' you condemn me of Rashness and ill Manners for so doing: For this is the Will of God, that you may be found a holy People prepared for every good Work: And therefore I exhort you in his Name; and authoriz'd by his high Command, I charge you not to neglect the great Salvation that is tendred to you this Day by my Ministry.

Then

Then stood up a *Braman*, and said, I never have seen hitherto any of all you Christians taking any care for the saving his own Soul, by doing Penance for his Sins; Whereas we *Malabarians* undergo many tedious and long Penances, *denying our selves* all the Pleasures of this Life; some spending their whole Life in Pilgrimage from one Country to another, and there are as many that stand most part of the time upon their Heads, living purely upon the Charity of others; some pray the Gods with Hands lifted up so long, that they can't take them down again, nor move them from that erected Posture; and more such Austerities are exercis'd among us *Malabarians* for the Honour of our Gods and Religion; But I see no such thing Practis'd among you Christians.

Sir, said I, your Severities exercis'd upon your own Bodies, are indeed amazing, and to me a strong Argument of your being fully convinc'd of the certain Existence of future *Rewards* and *Punishments* after Death; but can be no Proof of a sincere Repentance; For all this may proceed from a *foolish* Desire and Ambition of being thought holier than other Men, and more disengag'd from all Worldly Enjoyments, in Order to be
more

more esteem'd and honour'd than other Men; 'tis certain that Man will sooner Change his way of Living, and undergo all the Austerest Penances, *than change his Heart*, and renounce his *own Righteousness*, accounting himself after he has done all he can do, a very unprofitable Servant that has done nothing but his Duty.

You must come to this, else all your *Will-Worship* is of no use or advantage to you; I mean, you must take *Jesus Christ* to be your Lord and Saviour, made to you *Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*.

Then said one of them, this is strange Doctrine indeed; shall not Man do Penance for his Sins, lest forsooth, he may be taken notice of by the Croud of the ungodly World?

If true Repentance, said I, is wrought in your Soul, it will necessarily be accompanied by a holy Conversation and vertuous Actions.

Then another *Braman* stood up, and drove away all the Populace, lest they might be polluted in their Company; neither would they approach me too near, for fear of being made unclean by my touching of them.

Then

Then I said, Pray, Friends, what makes you to be so unreasonably Proud and Arrogant, and afraid of being touch'd by other Men? Whereas you should be Examples of Humility to all your Hearers and Disciples that are round about you?

This is no Effect of Arrogance, said they; but our Family is separated from other Families of the Earth, and are forbidden by our Laws to keep any familiar Intercourse with any other sort of People, upon Pain of being esteemed polluted by our own Brethren.

Then, said I, Pray, Sirs, of what Family do you derive your Pedigree?

We are descended lineally, answer'd they, from the God *Biruma*.

Why, said I, does not every Creature beget his like? And how comes it that you are born Mortal Priests; and not Immortal Gods, if descended from this Family of the Great God *Biruma*? He had *four Heads*, and you have but one only; and are in nothing unlike the rest of the *Malabarians*, unless that you surpass all the Inhabitants in all Superfluity

fluity of Noughtiness, and singular, uncommon Impieties.

Then another *Braman* address'd me in these Words; Sir, All what you have said in relation to the Family of the *Bramans*, is very true: For as to our bodily Appearance, what are we better than the vilest of the Populace? And when we die, our Bodies are reduced to Dust and Ashes, as the Carcasses of the *Bareyers*, (i. e. common Scavengers.)

At which Discourse, the others seem'd to be much offended; but he went on, and said, what Madness and Folly does possess your Minds? I will Eat and Drink with this Man, and am sure to receive no Damage by so doing; and thereupon came near me, and took me by the Hand, intimating that he assented to all that I said on that Head. An old Man that had been formerly the Governor of the Place, did me the same Complement, and endeavour'd to confirm all that I said, to the rest of the *Bramans*, and others there present.

Thereupon more *Bramans* came to me, and ask'd me, if I had more Sermons to distribute?

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I answer'd, I had no more Sermons with me at that time ; but in case that they did diligently peruse those few I had distributed among them, I would take care to furnish them with many more with all convenient speed ; and for that time I took my leave of them, recommending them all to the Gracious Protection of the Almighty.

At which Discourse, the others being to be much offended ; but he went on, and said, what Madells and Folly does—polls your Madell I will Eat and Drink with his Man, and can live to receive no Damage by so do-ing ; and thereupon came near me, and took me by the Hand, insinuating that he intended to assist I said on that Head. An old Man that had been formerly the Governor of the place, did me the same Complement, and endeavour'd to confirm all that I said, to the rest of the Brethren, and others there present.

Con-

and asked me, if I had more Sermons to distribute.

Conference X.

Of the Education of Youth, and of the Duty of Pa- rents and School-Masters.

Between some *Malabarian* School-Boys,
and others, and one of the *Danish*
Missionaries.

ON the Eleventh of *April* 1708, I
went into a *Malabarian* School,
and ask'd the Children what they
learnt. I found they had learnt
several Books by heart; but when I ask'd
them the Meaning of the same Expressions
they had committed to Memory, and re-
peated so readily,

I

They

They excus'd themselves, saying, that their Masters did not explain to them any of the occurring Difficulties that are obvious enough to all that read those Books.

Mean while, many *Mahometans* and *Mala-
barians* assembled together; and addressing my self to the Children, I spake to this Effect; My dear Children, the Great God has made you perfectly beautiful, and endued you, not only with strong Limbs and healthy Bodies; but has blessed you with Immortal Souls: If you aspire after true Learning and Knowledge, you must principally, and in the first place, study to know God, your Maker; and from your tender Years, labour to avoid all that has any Appearance of Evil; and exercise your selves in all that is honest and praise-worthy; For otherwise the Devil will draw you aside to the Practice of Vice and Wickedness: from whose Snares you can't afterwards easily extricate your selves, when you arrive to Riper Years.

I truly lament your unhappy Circumstances, to have neither Parents at home, nor Masters in these Publick Schools who are capable and willing to season your Minds betimes with the saving Knowledge
of

of God ; for both your Parents and Masters are as ignorant as your selves ; and walk themselves in the Ways that lead to Hell and Destruction : And as for the Books you read, 'tis to your Advantage that you are ignorant of the Contents thereof : For they are of no other use, but to corrupt your Understanding, and make you more indispos'd to learn the Truth in the lieu thereof, and to desire the Knowledge of the one only true God, who is Gracious and Merciful, willing that Babes and Sucklings, and all young Children shou'd be fed with the sincere Milk of his Word, and be brought up in the Nuture and Admonition of the Lord.

Then I ask'd them, Do you understand, my sweet Children, all that I have said unto you ?

They answer'd, Sir, we have understood you very well.

And are you resolv'd, added I, to practise what I have commanded you.

They all answer'd, Yes, if we know how to begin and set about it.

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Then

Then said I, when you go from School, and come to any retir'd Place, fall down on your Knees, and say, *O thou that has created the Heavens and Earth, instruct us in the Knowledge of thy Gracious Nature, and holy Will; deliver us from the Power and Dominion of Idolatry and Superstition; And grant, O Lord, we may acknowledge and worship no other God besides thee, the only true God. Convert us, O Lord, and enlighten our Understandings more and more, that we may know our Duty towards thee, our God, and towards all others, our Fellow-Creatures.*

If you thus exercise your selves daily with sincere and pure Hearts, the Lord will have Mercy upon you, and will incline your Hearts to keep his Law, and do all his Will, and will furnish you with all the sufficient Means necessary for attaining the Knowledge necessary to make you truly happy.

Then one of the Heathens stood up, and said, how then comes it to pass, that some Children are naturally inclin'd to what is Good, and others as naturally bent and inclin'd from their most tender Years, to commit all sorts of mischievous Actions, maugre all the good Instructions of Parents or School-masters? Who is the Cause of this
Prone-

Proneness to Evil, and Inclination to Virtue ; the Parents, God, or the Children themselves ?

I answer'd, God is no way the Cause, nor the Occasion of the wicked Inclinations, discovering themselves very early in Children: For God made Man righteous without Spot or Blemish, or any such thing ; and Man might have continued in this righteous, sinless State, and propagated Children as righteous and innocent as himself ; but our First Parents being deluded by a wicked subtle Devil, rebelled against God by Disobedience, and thereby lost his Image, consisting in *Righteousness* and *Holiness*, and became disturb'd in all the Faculties of the Soul ; his Understanding was darkned, and all the Affections disorder'd with respect to their proper Objects, eschewing Good, and pursuing after Evil ; and the Children, partaking of all the disorder'd Passions of their Parents, are commonly inclin'd to do Evil, before they know what it is to do well ; And this *Original Sin* is the Source of all actual Transgressions, divided into infinite Rivulets and lesser Streams of Deviations and Errors, in the whole Course and Stages of Human Life.

Then one of the Company answer'd, and said, What you say, Sir, carries with it all the Semblance and Colour of Truth ; and I really am of your Opinion, that Children are born with some wicked Inclination and Proneness to Vice ; but as God is the Author of Nature, why does not he prevent, or heal this *Original* Disease of Human Nature ; since no Child is born into the World without the Concurrence of his Divine Will ?

Sir, said I, that none is born without the Concurrence of the Divine Will, is unquestionably true ; and 'tis as true, that all Children are born and conceived in Sin : 'Tis likewise a great Truth that God is no way accessary to this Original Evil : For, as we hinted before, he created our First Parents holy, harmless, and undefil'd, *after his own Image* ; but they *found out many Inventions*, and became disobedient to their Creator ; and ever since, their Posterity are sinfully inclin'd from their Youth, and therefore need all the possible Care, both of Parents and Masters, to bring them up in the Fear of the Almighty, by making them early, sensible of their Incapacity of performing what is requir'd of them, and of avoiding Evil, without the Assistance of Divine Grace, and

a continual Watch upon their own Hearts ; and that Parents and Teachers may be helpful and useful in bringing up Youth for the Service of God, they must themselves be pious and sober, experiencing the Work of true Conversion wrought in their own Souls : and when they are thus dispos'd, God will bless their honest Endeavours, in teaching little Children his Ways.

Then one of them stood up, and said, Sir, a Thorn will remain a Thorn ; the Skill and Care of the Husbandman can't convert it into a Fig Tree.

I answer'd, We are all by Nature sinfully inclin'd, and of a *Thorny* Constitution ; and by the Care of Parents, Masters, and the Concurrence of the good Husbandman, (God himself,) we are to be really chang'd and renew'd in the Spirit of our Minds, and become new Creatures, bearing much Fruit to the Honour of the Great Husbandman. And as for your Comparison taken from Thorns, it does not hold at all in this Matter : For Man has Ears and Understanding ; and therefore capable of hearing and receiving Instruction for the better Conduct of his Life, which can't be apply'd to vegetative and irrational Beings ; because they are not free Agents endu'd with Will and Under-

standing, as we see, Man is, who upon solid Reasons and Persuasions, can leave his wicked Courses, and lead a sober and regular Life; and therefore we never despair of the Conversion of any Man living, however irregular and disorder'd he may be in Life and Conversation: And we experience the Truth of this every Day; For the best of Saints have been the worst and greatest of Sinners.

Con-

Conference XI.

*Of the Falseness of the Hea-
then Gods. Objections a-
gainst the Trinity an-
swer'd.*

Between a Learned *Malabarian* Phy-
sician, and one of the *Danish* Missio-
naries.

ON the First of *May* 1708, there
came to me a Learned *Malabari-
an* Physician from *Nagapatnam*,
who said, Sir, I am told, that
you have learnt our Language, with a
Design to teach us a new Religion.

I answer'd, 'Tis the greatest Pleasure of Life to me, to discourse with the *Malabarians* in their own Language, upon any edifying Subject; and this is the Reason, that I did alway importune my God in my Prayers, that I might attain to a speedy and perfect Knowledge of the *Malabarian* Tongue.

He answer'd, We have had *Christians* amongst us for many Years who always scolded at us, calling us *Heathens*, *Heathens*; tho' they never made it out that we were so indeed; nor that our Religion is False and Heathenish. I would willingly know your Opinion on this Head.

Sir, said I, when I consider your Conduct and Address in the Affairs of this World, I look upon you as a Wise, Ingenious People, of very easie and agreeable Conversation: But when I reflect upon your gross Ignorance in the things relating to the Salvation of your own Souls, and upon the Abominations of your Idol-worship, I am oblig'd to call you *Heathens*, and your Religion is *False* and *Impious*.

He

He reply'd, Pray, Sir, don't you see that we own and worship a Divine Supreme Being ; believe another World wherein Vertue is rewarded, and Vice severely punished ; and pursuant to this Belief, we do great Penances, and mortifie our Bodies, to the End we may attone the Displeasure of God, and receive the Pardon of our Sins : We encourage likewise all sorts of Vertuous Actions, as earnestly as your selves ; how can we then be esteemed Heathens ?

I answer'd, Pray tell me, Sir, is it better to have no God at all, or to worship many Gods who are really Devils.

'Tis better, said he, to have no God at all, than to worship a Devil ?

The Case is your own said I ; for you have indeed many Idols ; but 'tis the Devil who is worshipp'd in, and by these Images : Therefore according to your own Confession, you are much worse than those that worship no God at all ; for you actually reproach your Maker, by giving the Devil that Honour due to him that made you, and continues your Lives in Being.

But

But how can you demonstrate, reply'd he, that we adore false Gods? This you are to prove clearly, else you say nothing at all that affects our Religion.

I proved, that there was but One God that made Heaven and Earth, by many evident Demonstrations, borrow'd from the Works of the Creation, to his great Satisfaction; then I concluded, if there is but One only true God, all your Idols are no Gods, but Lying Vanities; as may be shewn, and prov'd out of your own Authors; For some of them have writ very well against *Idolatry* and *Superstition*, asserting boldly, that there is but *One* Supreme Being.

He said, I am a Physician, and know not well what to say; but our Priests will give you satisfactory Answers to all your Objections made against our Religion, out of a Book intituled *Dukkastirum*, being writ expressly as an *Apology* or Defence of our Country-Gods and Pagod-worship.

Sir, said I, if you can help me to this Book, I'll study to do you some other service; and if you please, I'll requite you, with a Book that demonstrates the Truth of the Christian Faith.

He

He answer'd, that he was credibly inform'd, there was such a Book extant; but that himself had neither seen, nor read it; and that the *Bramans* seldom suffer Laymen to read such Books as those; and much less would they be willing that Christians should peruse such Mysterious Writings.

I reply'd, If it is a Book that contains such convincing Truths, in favour of your false Gods, why don't the *Bramans* vouchsafe us the sight thereof? Which would redound to their Honour and Edification: For if your Religion be of a heavenly Original, we would willingly embrace it, and pay all due Veneration and Worship to the *Malabarian* Gods: And therefore I am inclin'd to believe, that there is no such Book extant, or that it is in the same Stile with your other Writings; I mean, weak, insipid and contradictory.

I shall adjourn the farther Discussion, said he, of this Debate, till such time that I can bring a *Risbi* (Prophet) along with me, well vers'd in Books of Controversies and able to answer all your Objections relating to Religious Matters.

Do

Do so, said I, and bring with you in writing the Demonstrations of the Truth and Reality of your Gods, and I'll take care to commit to Writing a Chain of Arguments demonstrating the Falseness and Nullity of your Religion; and both our Writings shall be read publickly before an Assembly of *Malabarians*.

He answer'd, Tho' I am now an Old Man, yet I dare affirm, that I never address'd my Prayers to these Idols, nor ever honour'd them with Sacrifices in the Pagods; And on the other hand, I never blasphem'd them, or did any thing that might reflect Reproach upon their Divinity.

Then, said I, you liv'd without God in the World.

I invok'd, said he, the Cause of Causes; and in all Humility of Mind ador'd and honour'd the Supreme Being.

I find many of your Mind, said I, who never frequent the *Pagods*, nor offer Burnt-sacrifices to Idols; but are still altogether ignorant of the *True God*, in relation to his Nature, Attributes, and the Dictates of his Divine Will; and of this you'll be alway
ignorant

ignorant till you are instructed out of his Revealed Will. 'Tis to this holy Word of God you must give diligent heed : For 'tis thro' the Means of this inspir'd Book you are to expect Everlasting Life.

I confess, reply'd he, that we talk a great deal about the Supreme Being; but, pray, tell me, do you know the Man that ever saw God, to the end he may speak upon his own Experience, in more lively Characters, and Delineations than have been hitherto made use of in the Definition of God ?

God does not appear in bodily shape, said I : For he is a *Spirit* ; but he has appeared, and revealed himself by his Son *Jesus Christ*, who clothed himself with the Garments of Mortality, to the end he might suffer for our Sins, reconcile us to God, and bring us to him, and to do his Will ; which is our Salvation. If you believe in Christ the Redeemer of Mankind, your Mind will be more and more enlightned in the Knowledge of the Supreme Being.

Who is his Son, said he ? *And is he also God.*

I answer'd, He is *God blessed for ever*.

But, pray Sir, recollect your self, said he, have not you been just now inveighing against Plurality of Gods? And now I find, you have your selves more than *One*; the Father is God, and the Son is God; then you have *Two Gods*.

I answer'd, We do not believe Two Gods, but One only God; tho' at the same time, we firmly believe, that there are Three Persons in One Divine Essence; and yet these Three Persons are not Three, but One God: And this we believe as a great Mystery, transcending our weak finite Faculties: We are satisfied, that 'tis a revealed Truth in Scripture; and God, who knows himself, has enjoin'd us to believe a *Trinity of Persons in one Divine Essence*; which we call *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.

If God has a Son, said he, then your God as well as some of ours, must have a Wife, and is by Consequence, a material Being.

God

God is a Spirit, said I, and therefore has no bodily Shape, and consequently could not have a Son in the ordinary Way of Generation; but without any Knowledge of a Consort, he begat his Son from Eternity, by Generation not to be parallell'd in Time; and from Father and Son *proceeds* the Holy Spirit, the *Third* Person in the Blessed Trinity; which tho' to us Mortals incomprehensible; yet the Possibility thereof may be shadow'd forth by an easie Familiar Comparison: Out of the Immaterial Soul of Man proceeds, and is born the *Understanding*; and from the Essence of the Soul, and the Understanding, emanates or proceeds the *Will*; and yet the Soul, (as to its Essence) the Understanding, and the Will, are really but *One* and the same thing. The Application thereof is easie to the Doctrine of the *Trinity* as far as Divine Things may be compared to Things created, that are within our Ken.

I find, said he, that you with subtil Ways of arguing, can make a *Trinity* consistent with *Unity*; and if your Explication is Absolutely necessary to make others understand what you mean, pray, allow us the same advantage of explaining the Doctrine of our Religion, and putting it in the favourablest
K Light

Light we can, for the excluding of the Absurdities imputed to us? And this once granted us, 'twill follow, that *Our Plurality* does not destroy the *Unity* of God, no more than *your Trinity* does. We worship the Gods upon no other Account, than because they are the *Vicegerents* of the Almighty, whose Administration he employs in governing the World, as he did employ them at the Beginning in Creating and Forming the same. And our God appearing among Men at sundry times under different Shapes, had at every Apparition a different Name given Him, which contributed very much to the Multiplying the Number of our Images; whereas in truth, they are but different Representations of the same God, under different Aspects and Appearances.

Sir, said I, what you say, is very plausible, and might weigh with those that are not well vers'd in the Articles of your Religion; but all these fine explicatory Comments are lighter than Vanity, and have no Weight with me; because I have both read your Books, and seen with my own Eyes your *Idolatrous* Performances. For let us suppose with you, that the Supreme Being, or God, in the Beginning created these Gods, and employ'd them to create the World; yet 'tis clear, that the holy God would make use of

of *Lieutenants* like himself, in Piety and Justice ; and would not employ Publick Robbers and Adulterers, plung'd in all the Dregs of Sensuality, and studied Mischiefs, such as all your Gods are notoriously known to be, living in an Eternal State of War and Contention among themselves ; and more likely to bury the World in its own Ruins, or reduce it to its Primitive *Chaos* and Confusion, than to direct this great Machine with any tolerable Regularity ; especially, the moral Actions of free, rational Agents, the chief Care of God's governing Power and Wisdom. As to the Apparitions of your God under various Shapes, 'tis nothing but a mere Fiction of your Poets, *Allegorically* setting forth various Adventures, consistent with the *Genius* of wild undisciplin'd Tyrants ; but no ways agreeable to the Nature of the meanest Servant of the holy God.

Well, said he, I am resolv'd to consult our *Bramans* upon these Matters, and urge them to be plain in telling their Meaning freely upon this Head.

K E

Your

Go Your *Bramans* are much blinder than your self in these Matters, reply'd I; For tho' they are convinc'd of the Falseness of their Gods; yet they'll hardly own it to you; for that would turn the Stream from their Mill; and their pious Frauds would be expos'd to the View of all Mankind. Go home rather, and consult the only true God, praying him earnestly to lead you into all Truth, both of Faith and Practice; and then you'll clearly see, that all your *Malabarian* Gods are but *lying Vanities*.

These Questions, said he, have taken all the time that I design'd for Questions of another nature.

I ask'd, what Questions he meant?

He answer'd, Questions relating to the Art of *curing Diseases* in Human Bodies; for I would know how they prepare Medicaments among the *Europeans*; and whether they have skilful Men in the Art of Medicine.

I answer'd, this shall be the Subject-Matter of the next Conference. And if you will procure me some good *Manuscripts* in Medicine, you'll highly oblige me ; for I desire to see you shortly at *Negapatnam* and to save you the Trouble of coming hither.

K 3 Con-

Conference XII.

*Christian Religion and true
Piety consists chiefly in Pra-
ctice. The Laws and
Poesie of the Malabarians.*

Between Two Malabarian Poets, and
a Braman, and one of the Danish
Missionaries:

ON the Twelfth of May 1708, Two
Malabarian Poets favour'd me
with a Visit, accompanied with
a Braman. I ask'd them, with
what View they did me this Honour?

K 4

They

They said, 'twas their Curiosity led them to talk with an *European*, having heard that I understood the Language of the Countrey, and conversed freely with all sorts of People ; which they never heard before of any of my Countreymen.

I answer'd, 'Tis true, that I converse daily with some of the Inhabitants about the Things relating to their Salvation ; but I must confess, that but few of them do endeavour to put in Practice my Instructions ; tho' they allow them to be all very true, and necessary to be observed.

Sir, said they, it does not import what use they make of your Instructions ; your Business is to make wise Answers to Questions that are propos'd unto you.

Hence I may conclude, answered I, that your Design in this Visit is not right : For I am afraid you come to satisfy your vain Curiosity, more than to be instructed in the great Things of God, and the other World, which grieves me very much ; not that you Endamage me ; but that you run the Risque of destroying your own Souls ; adding to the Weight of your Sins and Guilt, by jesting with holy Things.

Hereupon

Hereupon the Poet answer'd, Sir, 'tis a great deal easier to Hear, than to Act; and 'tis highly probable, that many among Christians can hear a good Discourse very willingly, who seldom are solicitous about the putting it in Practice.

I said, 'tis very true, that by Nature we are all averse from doing that which is good; and, till converted by the Power of God's Spirit, it can't be expected that Men carnally-minded, should be Spiritually and Piously inclin'd. Whether they be *White* or *Black* Men, *Heathens* or *Christians*, they must believe in Christ, and repent heartily of all their Sins, else they can't put in Practice the Precepts of the Gospel; tho' it must be confess'd, that unregenerate Christians have better Opportunities for the inducing them to the Practice of Piety, than you *Malabarians* have; for they Enjoy all the Means of Conversion.

The *Braman* ask'd, what are those Means that can induce Men to live good Lives?

The

The Words of the Gospel, answered I, are the only saving Means, ordered by God to induce sinful Men and Women to repent of their Sins, and to live holy, sober Lives, worthy of God, and of the high Dignity of the Human Nature ; all clearly described in this Glorious Gospel of *Jesus Christ* : Therefore 'tis otherwise called, The good Tidings of Salvation proclaiming Peace on Earth, and good Will towards Men.

The *Braman* answer'd, We have all these among our selves ; for our Law is the Word of God, and I am one of the Priests of God, teaching the People the Way that leads to Eternal Happiness.

You are always speaking of your *Law*, which you call God's Word ; but I am inclined to believe, said I, you have no such Law among you : For if you have any such Law, why don't you produce it ; I never found hitherto any *Braman*, that could upon his own Experience affirm, that he ever saw this Law ; but says, that such another Great *Braman* has it in his Possession ; and if you address this great *Braman*, he refers you to some other *Braman* greater than himself ; and so none of you can ever produce this Imaginary Law.

That

That there is such a Law, you must not in the least doubt: For my self have seen it, said he, and read it.

Why don't you then read your Law to the People, and explain it in your *Pagods*, reply'd I?

He answer'd, 'Tis Writ in the *Bramish* Tongue, which can't be well translated into the *Malabarian*. Besides that, it contains such deep Mysteries, that surpass the Capacities of the Populace; for did you attempt to explain to them the mysterious Contents of the Divine Law, they would certainly lose their Senses, and become distracted.

I proceeded to ask him, who gave you this Law? God or Man?

The *Braman* answer'd, the God *Biruma* gave us this Law; but the Poet contradicted him and affirmed, that 'twas the God *Tschimen*; and the other Poet was fully assur'd that the God *Ruddireu* was the Author of it; Thus they disagreed in their Sentiments.

I further ask'd them, with what View was this Law given to the *Malabarians*?

That by the Means thereof they may attain everlasting Happiness, both *Bramans*, and other Orders and Ranks of Men, answer'd he.

But if so, said I, all Men are oblig'd to hear and study it, as well as you *Bramans*. And why don't you explain this Law to the People, that they may regulate their Conversations accordingly?

He reply'd, tho' they don't read the Law, yet they read several good Books that are taken out of the Law, containing all the necessary Rules for the leading of a sober, honest Life.

I desired him to name me some of those Books.

He answer'd, *Dirumteaschagum*, *Dirumweidel*, *Dirumwalluer*, *Paradum*, and other the like Books.

I ask'd him, if all contain'd in these, agree with all that is written in your Sacred Law-Book?

He answered, Yes.

Then, said I, all these Books I have perused; and if your sacred Law contains no better Things, it must have the Devil for its Author; and must lead all its blind Followers into the Pit of Hell; and I wonder, you can name such Books, as containing the necessary Rules to a holy Life, whilst the Books *Dirumweiadel* and *Paradum*, are so full-fraught with insipid Stories and Nonsense, that a wise Man would be very sorry to have given himself the trouble to peruse such uncooth Extravagancies; so far are these Books from marking out the Way that leads to Eternal Happiness, that they are destructive of good Morals, and the Practice of common Honesty.

They wondred to find me so well vers'd in the mysterious Books of their Religion; and asked me, what other *Malabarian* Books I had read? Whereupon I shew'd them my Collection of *Malabarian* Books, giving my Opinion upon every Book separately.

The

The two Poets asked me, if I would employ them in my Service :

To whom I answered, Repent and leave your Idols ; then I'll take care to see you employed.

But they urged me to employ them then, by giving some Subject-matter for Verse. Whereupon I gave them the following Argument.

There is one God, in whom we believe; and those that know him not; but adore the Malabarian false Gods, are Heathens, and are in danger to be damned for ever.

This Matter in a very little time, they spun out into a fine Poem of a considerable Length, against the Plurality of Gods ; and having read this almost extempore Poem, I told them, what pity is it, that Men of such bright Genius's and ready rich Invention, should act against your Consciences, by worshipping Graven Images, instead of the True God, whom you have so excellently well describ'd in this Specimen of your great Abilities in the Art of Poesie !

They

They answer'd, We are born in this Country, and can't get our Living any where else ; and did we begin to talk against the Religion by *Law established*, we are quite ruined ; for no body would receive us into their Houses.

At this rate, said I, you would rather go to Hell in *Malabarian* Company, than to Heaven in the Company of Strangers, and suffer some Inconveniencies in this World upon the Account of Truth, and the Honour of the God that made you.

They reply'd, When we see our *Kings* and *Princes* coming over to your Religion, we shall follow their good Example.

But if in your way you found a great Treasure, said I, I don't believe, you would let it lie there till your King would be pleas'd to take it up first. You have now a Jewel of great Price offer'd to you, even the Doctrine of Salvation ; 'tis your Interest to accept of it, tho' Kings and Princes may neglect so great a Salvation.

He

He answer'd, I wish you would be pleas'd to come once into our Country, where Learned *Bramans* and Prophets would be glad to see you, and confer with you very willingly.

How willingly, would I travel all your Countrey over, and converse amicably with all sorts of Men about the Ways and Means of Salvation; but I know, no *European* can Travel in your Country, much less is it permitted for me, a Christian Minister, to Preach among you the glad Tidings of the Gospel: And what is still more an Argument of your Untowardness towards Men that would teach you the Way to everlasting Happiness, that all Communication by Letters are strictly forbidden between this and the City where your King resides: An Example of Severity and Stubbornness not to be parallell'd in any Parts of the World.

Many of the common People, said he, would be glad to see you; but the King's Officers, and especially Excisemen, would be apt to stop you, to the end they may squeeze Money out of you, and then deliver you bound to the King of *Tanjour*, who is a mortal Enemy to the Christians, and has caused many of the *Romish* Religion to be cruelly Murthered.

I answer'd, had I a full Call to come to your Parts to Preach the Gospel, I would gladly come ; but my hands are now full, and I have many neighbouring Heathens to be instructed in the Doctrine of Salvation. When the Harvest here is at an End, and no more Work for us in these Parts, I hope, God Almighty will open a Way for the glad Tidings of the Gospel to be preached in your Country also.

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Conference XIII.

*Of Philosophy and Idolatry;
and of Internal Spiritual
Worship.*

Between a *Malabarian* Philosopher, and
one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Twenty second of *May*,
1708, I received a Visit from a
Malabarian Philosopher, who
asked me, if the Study of Philo-
sophy was in any esteem in *Europe*, and what
Sect was most in vogue at this time?

Sir, said I, you know that my Business is to Preach *Repentance* towards God, and *Faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ; Therefore you should ask me Questions relating to your Eternal Welfare, rather than Niceties of Philosophy?

Pray Sir, said he, what can be more necessary for the attaining Eternal Happiness, than the useful Knowledge of Philosophy?

Indeed, said I, your Philosophy is no less corrupted, and full-fraught with Impious Absurdities, than your Law and Histories are; but among us *Europeans*, Philosophy is little esteemed, if compared with the excellent Heavenly Institutions of Jesus Christ.

What, said he, have you no Philosophers then in *Europe*?

Yes, we have, answer'd I, and more profoundly and exactly learned in all Parts of Philosophy, than you can boast of in these Countries; but we cultivate the Sciences, as *subservient* Handmaids to Theology; but not as immediate Means of Salvation.

How

How is it possible, reply'd he, that I should know God, and Spiritual Things, if I don't first know my self, and the Works of Creation, the immediate Objects of my Senses ?

All this, reply'd I, is very True ; but this is what I would say ; that all the natural Knowledge acquir'd by Reflection upon the Operations of our Mind, and upon the visible World, in all its beauteous Varieties, and Proportion, is not sufficient to make us *wise unto Salvation* : For my own Understanding, without the Help of revealed Light, can't discover the Original Cause of *Man's Misery*, nor ever attain to the Knowledge of a *Redeemer* ; nor shew how we are to serve God, in a manner acceptable and well-pleasing unto him. Therefore Philosophers deceive themselves by a vain Persuasion that they know all, when indeed, they know but very little, or nothing at all as they ought to know.

He reply'd, I and others of my Profession, do not believe a Plurality of Gods, worshipp'd in our *Pagods* ; neither do we frequent these Places to offer Sacrifices, or to perform tedious Ceremonies enjoyn'd upon the vulgar People ; but we reverently adore the *Supreme Being*, who created all Things.

If you are convinced, said I, of the Falsity of your Idolatrous Worship, why don't you endeavour to instruct the Ignorant in these great Truths, and encourage them to forsake Idolatry, and Worship the One only true God ?

He answer'd, We live in a World where very few Men can serve God without the Intervention of *Figures* and Images ; For we can hardly think of any thing, but as 'tis represented under some *Corporeal Idea*. And besides, if it was not for *Polytheism*, and Images, how could the *Bramans*, *Pantaren* and other Ecclesiasticks, find so comfortable a Living as now they Enjoy ?

But do you believe, reply'd I, that *Idolatry* is acceptable to the Supreme Being, whom, you say, you devoutly Worship and Adore ?

He answer'd, if Men would lead sober and good moral Lives, God would pardon them all other Failings ; for he knows, 'tis an Error of their Understandings, and that they know no better ; and tho' their Adoration more immediately is directed to the Idol, yet *ultimately* it terminates upon himself ; and therefore their Performances are not unacceptable to him.

I told him, all Idol-Worship is an Abomination to the Lord; for he is a *Spirit*, and is to be worshipped in Spirit and in Truth; and their Worship is acceptable to the Devil only, the first Author and Inventer of Idolatrous Worship.

I wish, said the Philosopher, with all my Heart, that all the World would adore the One only Supreme God, and destroy all Graven Images, and worship him, as you have well express'd it, in Spirit and in Truth.

But what Means and Assistance does your Philosophy afford to perform this Inward and Spiritual Worship, said I?

We have, said he, Three great Means to assist us in our inward Worship of God (*viz.*) *Fasting, Solitariness, and Watching*: For by the continual exercising our selves in these three Duties, our Minds ascend above the visible World, and are made fit to Worship God inwardly, or, as you say, in Spirit and in Truth.

These three *Rules*, said I, well observ'd, are very good; but without *Repentance from dead Works*, and a *lively Faith* in *Jesus Christ*, all Rules and Precepts will be of

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little use to you for the due Performances of his Internal and Spiritual Worship, so acceptable and well-pleasing to God: And therefore, in Order to worship him as you ought, you must be instructed in the Doctrine of the Gospel, which is the only Book that teaches fully and clearly the Means of Salvation and Reconciliation with God. If you would be happy, study this excellent Volume, and throw away all your other Books of learned Vanities.

He asked me, if I could shew him that excellent Book, which I called the Gospel?

Yes, said I, and shewed him the Bible printed in several different Languages; and gave him a summary Account of the *Oeconomy of Salvation*, with which he seemed very much affected, and asked me, if I had no Writing relating to the Christian Religion, translated into the *Malabarian Tongue*?

Thereupon I shew'd him *Luther's Catechism*, with Twenty Six Sermons preached by me upon the Articles of the Christian Faith in our *Jerusalem Church at Tranquebar*; and finding him mightily delighted in the reading of them, I bid him take them with

of Philosophy, Idolatry, &c. 153

with him, and read them diligently, not forgetting to instruct his poor Neighbours in the Doctrine of Salvation.

This he promised to do, and withdrew.

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Conference XIV.

Upon various Subjects.

Between several Persons, and one of
the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Twenty third of July, 1708,
I set out very early from *Tranque-
bar* by Land, to go to *Negapatnam*,
a Town belonging to the *Holland-
ers*: When I came to the Territories of the
King of *Tanjour*, I was presently stopp'd
by the Officers, commanding me to pay
Tribute-money. I alighted off my Horse,
and ask'd them, if their Priests had not free
Passage through all Countries?

They

They have so, said they, in all our King's Dominions ; but we know that you are not one of our Priests ; you are the *Christian-maker* of *Tranquebar*.

But, Sir, said I, Remember, that I left my own Country, and with great Pains-taking, learnt your Language merely out of Love to your Souls. Pray, shew me a Priest that has labour'd so much to promote your Happiness, as I have ; and dare you command me to pay Passage-money ?

Then a *Braman* that sat among the Custom house Officers told me, that if the King of *Tanjour* knew that I pass'd through his Territories, I should be forc'd to pay ten times more than what is commonly demanded from other White People ; because ever since you came to these Countries, you are, said he, always scolding at our *Pagods*, blaspheming our Gods, and cursing our Religious Ceremonies as Superstitious Errors and Idolatry.

All this, said I, is very true ; I have cry'd aloud against your false Gods ; and will go on to do so, not out of a Spirit of Contradiction ; but out of an Earnest Desire to convince you of your gross Errors and Ignorance

norance in Spiritual and Religious Matters.

The *Manikaren*, or chief of the Custom-house Officers told me, that I was certainly in the right : For we do not live worthy of the Dignity of Rational Beings ; and we are now in the Dregs of Time ; the World is plung'd in the Mud and Mire of Sensuality and Worldly-mindedness.

'Tis not enough for you to confess, said I, the Evil of your Ways, unless you do likewise eschew Evil, and follow after that which is good ; 'tis Imprudence in you to find fault with the Times : For to day is the Time of Salvation to you, and your Countrey-men, if you'll accept the kind Offers of Heaven, that are made to you at this time by my means : For I am come among you, willing to declare unto you the whole Counsel of God.

The *Braman* stood up, and said to me, we know, said he, you have a long way to go ; we'll spare you from paying any Tribute for this time : Then giving a few *Groats* among the Officers to buy *Betel Areck*, I rode forward, and was met by a numerous Company of Heathens of all Ranks and
De.

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Degrees, travelling towards *Diruppuddi*, a *Pagod*, Fifteen days Journey distant, and very famous for a Multitude of Pilgrims and Votaries, who resort thither, to the end they may receive Forgiveness of Sins. I shew'd them the Vanity of their Undertaking, inasmuch as none can forgive Sins, but the true God alone, through the Merits of his Son *Jesus Christ*, upon the Condition of *Faith* and *Repentance*.

Here I repeated compendiously the History of Christ's Life, Death and Resurrection, with the saving Consequences of the same; and then proceeded on my Journey, till I came to a Town called *Karcika*, where there is a Stately *Pagod*, or Heathen Temple; before which I passed by, on Horseback: Then suddenly both Priests and People pealed me with Maledictions and Abusive Words; whereupon I alighted off my Horse, and ask'd them what was the Matter, and wherein I had offended them?

The Governor of the Place told me, Sir, you should know that this *Pagod* is a most holy Place, and the usual Habitation of our God: Therefore 'tis forbidden all Men with Horses and *Umbrellas* to pass before it; even the King of
Tan.

Tanjour himself, approaching this holy Place, he gets out of his *Palanquin* (Chair) or alights off his Horse, and walks with great Devotion ; Therefore your riding by, and not alighting off your Horse, offended us very grievously.

Sirs, said I, if you can demonstrate, the Gods worshipped in this Temple, and the Doctrine taught therein to be true Gods, and true Doctrine, then, I confess, I incurr'd very justly your highest Displeasure ; and will Chearfully submit to condign Punishment : But if your Evidences are not cogent, or your Reasons demonstrative, how can you expect that a Servant of the great God, who made you, and a Priest, that teaches the Ways of Salvation, should alight off before the Temple of a Dumb Idol, which can neither hear, speak, nor go ?

Hereupon a Multitude of *Mahometans* applauded what I said ; and desir'd the *Bramans* to produce their Evidences for the Truth of their Gods and Religion ; which if they were not able to perform, they protested, I had all the Reasons in the World not to alight off my Horse in riding before the *Pagod*.

Where-

Whereupon the *Bramans* retired, one after another, giving me no Answer, nor Reasons in Defence of their lying Gods, and their false Religion.

Then addressing my self to the People, I spoke of two Ways of attaining to the Knowledge of God, either by contemplating the Works of *Creation*, or by diligent Reading the *Revealed Will* of God contained in the Old and New Testament; and recommending them to the Grace of God, I was ferry'd over a great River, and came into a Publick House, and there refreshed my self with my Companions: And finding the House full of Heathens, I discoursed them freely about the Way and Doctrine of Salvation; and they heard me with Attention, and unaffected Willingness; asking me, where was the Place of Happiness? Which was the true Way that led thither? And whether every Man might not be saved in his own Religion?

I answer'd what I thought proper, to their Three several Questions, giving them by the way, some of the *Characteristicks* or Marks of the True Religion, and of the Doctrine of Salvation, in Contradistinction to the Doctrine of Hell and Perdition, taught by their vain, ignorant, lying Priests.

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Con-

I answered that I thought proper to
 give him the same answer as I had
 given the other two, and that I was
 of the same opinion as they were.
 He then said that he was of the same
 opinion as they were, and that he was
 of the same opinion as they were.

He then said that he was of the same
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Conference XV.

About Matters of Religion.

Between some Learned *Bramans*, *Rischi* (Prophets,) and Physicians, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Twenty Seventh of July, 1708, the most Learned *Bramans*, *Rischi*, (Prophets) and Physicians, assembled at the House of one of the *Dutch* Magistrates, who had sent his Secretaries all about the Country, to invite them to a Friendly Conference about Matters of Religion: And they appearing, about Eight of the Clock in the Morning, were kindly received into the Chairs and Seats made ready for them, the Common Peo-

ple sitting upon a matted Floor, the Doors crowded with a great Multitude of People.

I signified my joyful Readiness of conferring with them about Matters of Religion, it being the distinguishing Character of a Rational Being, to be capable of Discourſing about the Things relating to the Supreme Being.

Hereupon a *Rischi*, or one of their Prophets, answer'd me, in the Name of his Countrymen, that they were as joyful to have an Opportunity to talk now, for the first time, with an *European* about Controverted Points in Religion, in their own *Malabarian* Language: But, said he, we find insuperable Difficulties that of necessity will retard our *Union* in Matters of Opinion, seeing we have no common Law own'd and received by *Europeans* and *Malabarians*, to which we may appeal as to a *Common Principle*: For if you talk of the Excellency of your Law, you can't expect it should have any Impression upon a *Malabarian* Audience, who know nothing of your *European* Laws; neither is it reasonably to be hoped, that you Christians will embrace our Laws and Religion upon our Commendation only.

I answer'd, I am very sensible, that what you say, is very rational and weighty ; and therefore justly claims our first Consideration, by inquiring into the Nature of, and *Characters* visible in the *Christian* and *Mala-barian* Laws : But seeing your Law can't be produced ; and that you can't read the Laws of the Christians, this Debate must be adjourned to another Opportunity ; and let us argue the Matter for this time, from the undoubted, universally-received Principles of Reason, and appeal to the Decisions of unprejudiced Conscience.

This Method they unanimously accepted, inviting me to propose some Subject-matter for a serious, sober Conference.

Then I began, with asking them, if they believed the Existence of *One* Supreme Being?

They answer'd, Yes ; We believe that there is One only God, the Maker and Cause of all other Beings whatsoever : For if we did not believe the Existence of a Supreme Being, what should put us upon writing so many Books about the Existence and Attributes of God ; and so many voluminous

Writings about Religiously worshipping this Supreme Being?

I reply'd, this is all very true, that all Nations, however Barbarous and grossly Ignorant, do believe the Existence of a Supreme Being; but they know nothing of his Attributes necessarily to be believed by all that would worship this Supreme Being in a way acceptable in his sight. Pray, tell me, what do you believe therefore of this Great God, who is the Creating and Efficient Cause of all other Beings?

The *Rischi* answered, We call him in our Tongue *Dewaddaduam*; and sometimes more expressively, *Barabarawastuwagira Saruwesuren*; that is, the *Supreme Independent Being, Lord of all*.

Your Definition of a Supreme Being, reply'd I, is very excellent, and expressive enough of his Spiritual Perfections; but I would fain know, if, besides him, you acknowledge no other God as the Object of your Religious Worship?

The *Rischi* (Prophet, or Doctor) said, we acknowledge no other God besides him; tho' many Persons, as his Vicegerents, vested with Authority by him to Govern the visible

sible World, are commonly called *Gods*.

How many such *Viceregent* Gods are there in all?

The principal and most considered among them, said he, are Three, *Biruma*, *Wischnu* and *Ruddiren* or *Isuren*; and they appearing among the Inhabitants of this Land at sundry Times, and Places, under different Shapes, our Forefathers gave them many different Names, expressive of some Circumstance or other, relating to the Divine Apparition.

I urged them to tell, if these Gods were Created or Uncreated Beings?

He answer'd, They have but *borrowed* Beings, and precarious Employments, to continue only till the *Restitution of all Things* to their first Primitive State and Condition; and then the Supreme Being shall be *all in all*.

Do you then, said I, esteem these Gods to be Ministers only employed by the Prime Cause; or to be Real and True Gods?

We esteem them to be such as Execute the high Commands of their Principal in the *Punctillio's* of a submissive and most profound Obedience.

Then, proceeded I, you make them Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, most Holy, Just, and Good.

Yes, said he, we believe them really such; and 'tis upon this supposition that we direct our Prayers and Supplications to them, and honour their Altar with Burnt-offerings; and all this we do, pursuant to the strict Orders of the Supreme Being.

Then, proceeded I, if you are able to prove that the aforesaid Attributes do properly, and in truth belong to your Gods, I am ready to be One of their truest Votaries; but in case you shall not be able to make good your Premisses, I expect you should forthwith forsake your false Imaginary Gods, and crown the Convictions of Conscience, by yielding unlimited Obedience to the Evidences of Truth.

An old *Braman* stood up, and said, I have perus'd all the Histories of our Gods, and never doubted of the Truth of their Divinity; and it would look very odd in a Man of my Age, now to call in question a Proposition so uninterruptedly, and *universally received*.

The *Rischi* hereupon reproved him, as inconsistent with himself, and all that were there present; who all agreed, that all Points should be try'd by the Dint of Reason and Evidence; and more especially, seeing, said he, he has promised to embrace our Religion, if we can produce Evidences, for the real Existence of our *Malabarian* Gods.

I answered, I'll hear you patiently, reading or relating the History of the Apparitions, Wonders, Lives and Achievements of your Gods; but you must not expect that relating a History amounts to Demonstration; but you must prove, that your Gods are really and truly endued with, and possessed of the forementioned Attributes.

Upon this, after some Consultation amongst themselves what Answer to give, they said, this Matter requires a great deal of time; and therefore, 'tis our Opinion,
that

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that the Conference should be adjourned to another Opportunity ; when we shall be better provided with Books, necessary for a Matter of this Importance ; and then, we shall be able to give you Entire and Rational Satisfaction.

Then, said I, if you dare not hazard a fair Hearing of their Cause, and an Examination of their Title to Divinity and Adoration, I am resolv'd to proceed in my intended Evidences, and to demonstrate the Vanity and Non-entity of all your Titular Gods, insisting chiefly upon your own Concessions, and the universal Truths own'd by all the *Malabarian Nation*.

You destroy with one Hand what you build and establish with the other, by asserting a *Plurality* of Gods, always at Defiance, and in open Hostility among themselves, supplanting, destroying, and murdering one the other ; as in the Case of *Wischnu* and *Mauei* ; and in that of *Biruma* Beheaded by *Isuren*, and *Dewaindoren* deposed by some petty subordinate Deities. These and such other the like Inconsistencies, are destructive of all true Religious Worship : For 'tis according to your System, altogether impracticable ; because you know not well where to address your selves in time of Danger : For
if

if you direct your Prayers to the one, another Deity is offended at your Devotion; and the Multiplicity of these intriguing Gods have quite defeated and depriv'd the Supreme God of the Worship due to his Name. So that although you own his Existence and Sovereignty, yet, which is as true as astonishing, you neither have a Form of Prayer invoking this Supreme Being, nor so much as an Hymn compos'd in his Praise, in all your Books of Devotions: Hence it comes to pass, that most of your Ignorant People have learnt by Heart Prayers and Hymns in Honour of *Isuren*, *Wischtnu* and *Biruma*, when yet, the wisest among you know little or nothing of the Nature and Properties of the Supreme Being.

But, to come to the sundry Apparitions of your God *Isuren*, who appeared Sixty four times in *Madurei* under the Name of *Isabokkenaden*; in all which Appearances here on Earth, he did nothing but what runs Counter to all that is holy and just, and is destructive of all the Attributes of God.

One of his Apparitions was to a Widow, in whose Service he engag'd himself, upon condition he might have Meat enough; and thereupon fell a eating so ravenously, that neither Menaces nor Persuasions could induce him

him to any sort of Work: And at last, the Widow complained to the King against this insatiable Eater; and the King gave him such a thumping Blow, that 'twas felt over all the universal World; but in that moment *Isuren* disappeared: And very many more such Pranks are to be found in the History of *Isuren*.

Wischtnu, say you, appear'd ten times under the Form of a Swine, a Tortoise, and under many more ridiculous Transfigurations; which, if now appearing before you in this Assembly, you would all run away frightened, and take him for a ghastly Devil, and not for your so much beloved God *Wischtnu*: And if you were not depriv'd of the common use of your Understanding, in relation to Religious Matters, you would esteem him, if possible, worse than any Devil: For all his whole Course of acting, is but a continued Practice of Theft, Murther and Adultery, and all the other *Species* of the grossest Wickednesses.

The time is too precious to be spent in repeating the infinite extravagant Actions of your other Gods; for what I have already said, is enough to make you sensible of the Unreasonableness of your Proceedings in the Important Matters of Salvation.

Therefore

Therefore, I beseech you, reflect seriously upon the Errors of your Ways ; break down the wooden Images, and burn them in the Fire.

All that I had said, was granted by them to be very true ; but they excus'd themselves, saying that this Multiplicity of Gods is one of the Great Supreme Being's Games or Pastimes, delighting himself with Varieties.

Then, said I, you'll make at this Rate the greatest Villanies and Abominations to be the Pleasure and Delight of the Almighty ; which destroys the Difference between Vice and Vertue, and between all that is called Good and Evil : And 'tis from these wicked Positions, that many of you, not only emulate, but outvie your own Gods in the Practice of uncommon Wickedness.

Then the *Rischi* stood up, and said, 'Tis not enough to blaspheme our Gods, and vilifie our Religion ; but you must prove that your Religion is better and more Eligible, by giving us a brief Account of the chief Articles that all the Christians do believe.

These

These Conditions I gladly accepted ; and shewed them, that there was but one God, One in Essence and Three in Persons ; I mentioned his chief Attributes ; That this glorious Three-One God had created all things Visible and Invisible, and had made Man after his own Image ; how Man had lost that Image by falling into Sin, and into the greatest of Miseries, as the Consequences thereof.

I gave an Account of the Original of Heathenism and Error ; and how God afterward revealed his Will to Mankind for enabling them to come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

I spoke of the Means of Salvation, and of the Reasons of Christ's coming into the World ; and how, and in what manner, he has redeemed his People from their Sins ; and how Men are made Partakers of Christ's Merits and Sufferings ; and of the Propagation of the Gospel among all Nations ; and lastly, I spoke of the Necessity of their Conversion, and of forsaking their false Gods, by true and sincere Repentance ; the Nature whereof I made plain unto them.

They

They gave great Attention to me in explaining all these Points, only the *Riscbi* made me several Objections against the *Trinity*, the Birth, Sufferings and Death of Christ for the Redemption of Mankind.

I told him, that in order to understand these things, he must have his Understanding enlightened by the Spirit of God, which is obtained by all that pray unto him.

Why then, said he, 'tis but your praying to our Gods, and you'll come to understand and love all the Mysteries and seeming Extravagancies of our Religion and Worship.

I reply'd, what you attribute to your Gods, is contrary to Reason and common Sense ; but nothing in our Religion implies a manifest Contradiction ; tho' we allow, that we have many Truths in our Syſtem, that are above Human Understanding ; and therefore 'tis with most profound Humility of Mind we believe them, upon the Testimony of God himself : For tho' we don't see the Reasons of many things ; yet we wisely suppose that there may be Reasons which we can't see ; and that 'tis highly reasonable to believe what God has revealed to us in his Word.

Then

Then another Ecclesiastick stood up, and said, you are yet young, Sir; and your Memory is yet faithful, retaining what you learnt and read; but we are Old, and our Memories are treacherous, and our Parts not so active and bright as yours are; therefore the best Religion may suffer in the Hands of bad Managers; and the worst may triumph in the Hands of a skilful Sophister.

I answer'd, Your Religion has the Advantage at this time, with regard to the Qualifications of its Advocates: For old Age carries a great deal of Wisdom and Experience with it, which is very considerable in managing Conferences upon Subjects of this kind; which don't consist in a great Readiness of talking, but in comparing received unexamined Notions, with the Standard of unbiassed Reason.

Then a Physician ask'd me some indifferent Questions about the Manners of the *Europeans*; as, whether they had any *Universities*, where *Medicine* and other Sciences were taught publickly? How Priests were Ordained among us? If we had different and distinct Families separated from other Men, by Customs and Ways of living peculiar

to each Tribe, and never to be married into another Clan? Moreover he would know how Kingdoms were governed, Marriage, celebrated? To all which Particulars I answered very shortly.

He was succeeded by a *Braman*, who Questioned me about the Duration of this, and the Beginning of another World; and whether the Soul went after Death? By this time five whole Hours had been spent in close Debate; and I thought best to conclude for that time; highly approving of all that was wisely spoken on their part; the *Rischi* (Prophet) likewise assuring me, that all that I had offer'd, had been taken kindly by the Audience; and that they would more deliberately weigh and consider what I had objected against their several Deities and Religion.

Then they were regal'd with *Betel-Areck* and Sweet-meats.

I took their several Names in Writing, to the end I might settle a Correspondence with some of the most sensible of them.

Conference XVI.

Of several Particulars relating to Idolatry, Necessity of Repentance, &c.

Between some *Bramans*, and others,
and one of the *Danish* Missionaries:

ON the Twenty eighth of July 1708,
I rode out of *Negapatnam*, in order
to hasten for *Tranquebar*; but I
took another Road; and coming
into a Town where was a great *Pagod*, and
accosting the *Bramans*, I ask'd them, what
Exercises of Religion were perform'd in that
Pagod?

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They,

They answer'd, Sacrifices are therein offer'd to the Gods, and Hymns are sung to their Praises, and we dance and play before them to the Sound of Instrumental Musick.

I answer'd, how can dumb Images be Gods, that can neither see, nor move, nor are sensible of any of your Theatrical Performances?

Hereupon some from among the Crowd reply'd, you are certainly in the right, Sir; they want our Assistance more than we stand in need of theirs: For no less than a thousand Persons are employ'd to set them upon the great Waggon, and draw them about in State, with a great deal of Sweat and Labour; for we are made to believe, that if the Image is not well served, or suffers the least Hurt, we infallibly bring Ruin and Destruction upon our own Heads.

Friends, said I, do you promise me Protection from the violent Hands of angry Men, and I will undertake to break in Pieces all the Gods worshipp'd in this Temple, without receiving any Hurt at all.

Then

Then the *Bramans* answer'd me passionately angry, and said, Sir, we see, you would fain expose us to the Laughter of all the People; but we would have you know, that these Gods whom you so vilifie, have been worshipp'd by our *Ancestors* for these *Ten thousand Years*; and as long as the Inhabitants are contented with their Gods and Religion, what have you to do to intermeddle in our Affairs?

'Tis true, said I, tho' you should continue in your Ignorance, your Blindness can't affect my Happiness; neither can I expect any additional Happiness in your Conversion; but your selves are to be great Gainers or Losers, according as you shall walk in the Way to Hell and Misery, or in that leading into Eternal Life. But, however, as I am a Minister of the Gospel, I must discharge with Fidelity, the Office and Duty of my Ministry, which is to admonish and exhort you to turn from Idols, to serve the living and true God; which if I don't do, I am no faithful Servant in my Master's Service; but if you will not repent, and forsake your Idols, I have done my Duty: neither my Conscience here, nor God himself in the Day of Judgment, will reproach me with Negligence

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gence and Cowardice in that which relates to your Salvation.

An old Man stood up, and said, we live in the *Kaliujur* (last Duration of the World) when all things are very confus'd and full of Irregularities ; and there are so many different Opinions about the Names and Nature of God, that a Man does not know what Religion he had best chuse and profess ; but when this Duration is at an end, all things will be put to rights again, and all the Nations of the World shall be in the same Opinion in these Matters.

I answer'd, that the Times are evil I don't deny ; but if you delay leaving your false Religion till the Duration of the present World is at an End, you are highly to be blamed : For if you die in your Sins, you'll be Eternally miserable ; and 'twill be then too late to repent and return to God ; but you'll bear the Punishment of your Idolatry.

Then the Town-Secretary ask'd me, Pray Sir, what would you say, what would you be at ?

I seek neither Gold nor Silver, nor any other Advantage from either of you, said I; this is what I seek, even your Salvation, and that you may come to the Knowledge of the Truth.

Then the Governour of the Place said, come, let us go from this great Heat, and led me into a cool Room, and treated me with Milk, Figs, and Coko-nuts; where being surrounded by a great Crowd of People, I shew'd to them the *Scope* and Design of Christ's Doctrine, and the Excellency thereof, and so recommended them to the Grace of God: And going on my Way, till I came to a Publick Resting-Place, I found many People sheltring themselves from the foultry Heat of the Season; and heard their mutual Complaints of the Difficulties of the Times, and of the great Taxes and Imposts they groaned under, without any Hope of redressing their Grievances from their cruel Governours.

'Tis to be wish'd, said I, that your King were better instructed in the Knowledge of the True God, and his Law, which directs Kings and Princes to govern the People with Clemency and Equity; knowing that they must give an Account to God of their Stewardship;

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ardship ; but the Idolatry allow'd, both by Prince and People brings a Curse upon the whole Land, whereof this is a Part, even your miserable Circumstances and Poverty.

They answer'd, this is none of our Faults; the *Bramans* and the Great Men of the Earth are only capable to begin and carry on a Reformation in our Land : If 'twas in our Power, we would certainly undertake it ; but this is above our Capacity.

'Tis true, you can't change, said I, your outward Circumstances for the better ; but you may change your inward Inclinations from running after lying Vanities ; and let them flow for the future in the purer Channel of the Fear of the True God ; and your godly Example may in time Influence your Friends and Relations to forsake the Abomination of *Idol-worship*.

Hereupon one ask'd me, can't we be saved in our own Religion, Sir ? What, are all the *Malabarians* in a State of Damnation ?

I answer'd, so long as you worship Idols, in lieu of the true God, you are obnoxious to Wrath and Eternal Punishment.

One

One of the Company stood up, and said, that is a very hard Speech indeed, to say none of this Nation can be saved, while we have so many sorts of Learned Books among us, and thousands of Holy Men that lead exemplary Lives.

I shew'd them, that their Books are full of lying Stories and Fables related of some of their Saints ; which if true, they were far from being Men of Common Honesty.

Hereupon a Woman lifted up her Voice, and said, Sir, you were a pious Man, without doubt, before your last Nativity, seeing you are now so Excellently well qualified with those bright Parts and Clearness of Understanding.

I answer'd, Good Woman, I was born but *once* into this World ; and your repeated Nativities is a gross Error, and an Handle to delay your Repentance, you foolishly expecting to be born again in Order to do Penance for Sins formerly committed ; but in this you are grievously mistaken : For you must repent while 'tis *called to day* ; and you must be born again by a thorough Change wrought in your Minds by the Power of the Spirit of God. And besides this, there is no
other

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other second Birth or Regeneration, where of if you will be Partakers, you'll be as ready as my self in talking of the things relating to the Doctrine of Salvation.

Another Woman, told me, that she believ'd I should never die, but that I shall live for ever.

I said to her, Woman, your Words happen to be true ; tho' as I am inclin'd to believe, your Thoughts and Conceptions of things are very erroneous : For they that are reconciled to God through *Jesus Christ*, and made true Members of his mystical Body, through a lively Faith, shall *never die* ; But that they shall not die a Temporal Death, is an intolerable Falshood ; but if you would live for ever, in a Spiritual Sence, you may, as well as I, upon condition you leave your Idolatry and wicked Living, repenting seriously of your past Sins : Do you apprehend my Meaning in all this ?

She answer'd, Yes.

I charg'd them all to reflect seriously
in my Absence, upon what I had said;
and so commending them to the Care
of the Almighty, pursued my Journey
towards *Tranquebar*.

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Conference XVII.

Of the Cause of the Publick Calamities, &c. of the Malabarians,

Between several *Bramans*, and others, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Fifteenth of *January* 1714, finding before one of the *Pagods* a great Multitude of People, as their Custom is, to divert themselves, talk of their respective Interests, complaining of the Scarcity of Money, and of other Necessaries of Life ; I ask'd them, if they

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they knew the *Cause* of all their present Miseries and Distresses ?

They answer'd, You know all, and we know nothing.

Then I proceeded, and told them, that their great *Sins* were the Source of all the present Inconveniencies they laboured under.

But, said they, the *Europeans* are Sinners, well as we ; What enormous Crimes are we then guilty of, that our Afflictions should be so universal ?

'Tis true, said I, that the *Europeans* are great Sinners, as well as you ; but they are not Ignorant of the *Supreme Being* ; neither do they adore Graven Images, nor have they rejected the Doctrine of the Gospel, when tendred unto them, as you do this Day ; and therefore 'tis a Wonder of Divine Patience that you are still a People ; and that you are suffer'd to walk on God's Ground.

Then a *Braman* stood up, and said, Our present Miseries flow from the Arbitrary and Uncontroul'd Will of God, who often involves both the Good and Evil in the same

same common Calamities ; or Sins, committed before this our last Nativity, may be the Cause of our present Sufferings ; and we may more immediately ascribe it to the Corruption of Publick Ministers, and the Weakness of our Prince suffering himself to be mis-guided by Parasites and Flatterers, who seek their own Interest more than the Publick Good.

Your first Two Reasons are ridiculous, and wickedly false, said I, as I have made it appear at another Conference : And as for your casting the Blame upon your King and Sovereign, this Excuse is as bold, as 'tis unreasonable : For they may with more semblance of Truth, reflect all their Miseries and Misfortunes upon you *Bramans*, for not imparting to them more wholesome Instructions, advantageous both to Prince and People : So that in truth, you *Bramans* (Ecclesiasticks) are the Cause of the Publick Calamities, wherewith this Land is sorely afflicted : For you give your selves out for the Darlings of Heaven, and Embassadors of the Gods, interpreting their Wills to the common People ; while you your selves are Promoters of ridiculous lying Absurdities in your *Pagods*, and substantial Originals of Worldly-mindedness, and Lovers of filthy Lucre ; therefore all the Publick Calamities
are

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are properly, and more immediately due to you crafty, sensual and covetous Priests, who have most effaced from the Minds of Men the Difference of Good and Evil, by your erroneous Doctrines, and worldly, vicious Conversation.

The People beholding the *Bramans* very earnestly, told them; what this Man says, is very true; we would fain know what Answer you'll return him: For we are not cern'd in the Accusation.

Then one of the *Bramans* spoke to this Effect; we teach the People to worship One only, and not Many Gods; and the Notion of a Plurality of Gods comes hence, *viz.* because God is variously *represented* under different Attributes and Forms; yet he is still but *One* God, as Gold is but one, as to its kind, tho' wrought into a Thousand different Figures, by the Art and Industry of the Goldsmith.

I answer'd, the Comparison is very odious, and reflects Reproach upon the Great Creator, whom you compare to lifeless Metal; and therefore I take this as no Answer to my charging you with teaching and promoting Errors among the People. And then directing my Discourse to the Audience, I ask'd them

of the Malabarians Calamities. 193

them, if they had any Notion of the True God that made Heaven and Earth? To which they gave no Answer;

Then asking them if they knew the *Pagod*-Gods they had in their Temples?

They answer'd, Yes, and repeated their several Names, with the Way of worshipping every God respectively.

Then turning to the Priests, Sirs, said I, these are living Testimonies of the Falseness of what you just now affirmed, *i. e.* that you taught the People to believe in *One only* God, and not in the Multiplicity of your Images: For of the Nature and Being of the First, they are stupidly ignorant; and as for the Last, they know them all by their Names.

Hereupon, One of the Priests answer'd, we have no time to teach the People, as you, and others, who have nothing else to do; we are oblig'd to assist at long tedious Ceremonies, which, tho' we begin two Hours before Sun-rising, yet are seldom ended before Ten a-clock; all the time we are, according to the Laws of our Order, strictly forbidden to talk with any Man whatsoever. Then we have many *Formula's* of Prayers, and
O Cere-

Ceremonious Washings in Holy and Consecrated Ponds, which take up most of our time till Noon ; and after all these Performances are ended, we must prepare Sacrifices, and offer Incense in the *Pagods* ; not to mention the many *Feasting* and *Fasting*-days we are obliged to observe ; so that you may plainly see, we have no time to instruct the People, as you do. And besides all this, our Order strictly forbids us to converse with several sorts of Families, and Tribes of People, lest we be defiled by them : For we are a *Holy Order* of Men, and the Vulgar are most of them Common or Unclean.

I answer'd, Your time might be better employ'd in teaching the People their Duty towards God, and towards their Fellow-Creatures, according to his own Will and Command ; and not according to your own vain imaginary Will-worship.

To this they reply'd, persuade our King to be a Christian, and we promise you to follow his Example.

How, said I, would you set him to be the Rule of Faith and Practice, whom you made but just now to be the Author of all your Miseries ; but Sirs, is it not probable, that upon you *Bramans* Receiving the Tenders of the

of the Malabarians Calamities. 195

the Grace of God, and adorning your Profession with the Fruits of Righteousness and holy Conversation, many of the great Men of the Earth would follow your Example, and at length the King himself be induced to embrace the Christian Religion ?

And intreating them to consider well what I had spoken, I bid them all adieu.

the Grace of God, and adorning your Piety with the fruits of Righteousness and holy Conversation, many of the great Men of the Church would follow your Example, and as length the King himself be induced to embrace the Christian Religion.

And, interesting them to do so well, as I had hoped, I bid them adieu.

After this, I returned to the place where I was confined, and continued there for some time, until I was again removed to another place.

During my confinement, I was permitted to read and write, and to converse with the other prisoners.

I was also permitted to receive visitors, and to receive letters from my friends and family.

I was also permitted to receive the Sacraments, and to attend the Divine Service.

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Conference XVIII.

*What Opinion the Heathens
entertain of the Christi-
ans ; and of many other
Particulars.*

Between a *Mahometan* Priest and a
School-master, and one of the *Da-
niss* Missionaries.

ON the Sixteenth of *January*, a *Ma-
hometan* Priest, and a *Malabarian*
School-master came to see our
Printing-House, and discourse up-
on Matters of Religion ; and sitting down
between them both, I said, Now a Minister
of

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of the Gospel has a *Mahometan* on the Right,
and a *Heathen* on the Left-Hand.

Whereupon the last reply'd, the Word *Heathen* imports no more than a Sinner; and if so, I am sure, that both *Christians* and *Mahometans* are as great Sinners as our selves.

The *Mahometan* said, since my coming into this Country, I have remark'd some things that are very wonderful to me, who knew nothing of these things before my Arrival: For there is a Prophecie recorded in our Books, that there will happen a great Alteration, and a mighty Change in Matters of Religion, by such and such Men that would come amongst us.

The *Heathen* added, and we have Prophecies much to the same purpose, which we commonly apply to you *Mahometans*, who have made great Alteration in these Countries of late Years, in Matters of Religion.

I answer'd, 'Tis God alone can change the Hearts of Men, and Consequently their Religion; not by Fire, and Sword, and Warlike Engines; but by mere *Persuasives* and Arguments, borrow'd from the Interest that
Mankind

Heathens *Opinion of the* Christians. 199

Mankind has in conforming themselves to the Holy Doctrine of Jesus Christ ; whether it be preach'd to you by Natives or Strangers ; therefore don't neglect this great Salvation offer'd to you this Day through my Ministry.

The *Heathen* said, 'tis our Sins that hinder us from accepting of, and closing with what you propose to us; and 'tis impossible for us to become *Christians* (tho' you Preach the Christian Doctrine among us) till God does give the Power to leave our wicked Ways, and turn to him with all our Hearts : Therefore we must expect with Patience, till such time as it will please God to work this Change of Mind and Will in us : For till then, all the best Means are but thrown away upon us.

'Tis very true, reply'd I, that your Sins separate you from God, and detain you in the Chains of Ignorance and Unbelief ; but should not you by so much the more make a diligent search after the Redeemer of the World, who came to save you from the Dominion of Sin, and the Devil, the mortal Enemies of your Soul ? If you do but patiently and obediently hear Instructions, God will give you all the necessary Aids and Assistances of his Divine Grace, to enable

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you to shake off the heavy Yoke of Sin, and the Devil's Tyranny, to the end you may enjoy the glorious Liberty of the Children of God in Light : But you must not expect that God will force and compel you to be holy here, and happy hereafter : For you must likewise do what is requir'd at your hands ; that is, make use of the *Means* that are now offer'd unto you : But if you neglect so great Salvation, your Destruction comes from your selves.

The *Mahometan* ask'd me, how comes it that God suffers so many Heathen Nations to thrive and flourish, when both you and us agree, that the World is govern'd by a wise Providence, which one should think, ought to prevent the Entrance of Evil into the World ?

I answer'd, that God rules the World, not by his Absolute Power, but by his great and infinite Wisdom, which knows how to bring Good out of Evil ; and spares whole Nations for the sake of a few Holy ones, who will in time Embrace the Doctrine of Salvation, and propagate the same to latest Posterity.

Then the *Mahometan* ask'd me, why the *Christians* make use of so many Similitudes
and

Heathens Opinion of the Christians. 201
and Metaphorical Expressions in their Discourses and Writings?

I answer'd, because all Languages consist in Words denoting only things obvious to our Senses; but in speaking of Spiritual Things, we are oblig'd to express them by Similitudes and Parables.

Then he repeated a Passage of History relating to *Mahomet*, who at his first setting up for a Prophet, was desir'd by the Deputies of a certain Neighbouring Town to solve them a Thousand Difficulties propos'd unto him, in order to assure themselves that his Mission was Heavenly, and that he was divinely inspir'd; and upon his Non performance, they suspected his Doctrine to be no more than sanctified Hypocrisie, mix'd with a great deal of crafty subtil Dealings: But immediately the Angel *Gabriel*, appearing at his Right hand, solv'd all these puzzling Questions, publish'd since in a separate Volume called *Airam Muslam*, and translated out of *Arabick* into *Malabarian*; whereupon they receiv'd his Religion; and I must confess, you answer so justly and fully to all Questions propos'd unto you, that one should suspect that you have the Assistance of some familiar *Demon* or other, won-

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wonderfully skill'd, and ready in Extempo-
rary answering hard Questions.

Upon this, we gave over talking, and
walk'd in the Printing-house, they being
astonish'd at this rare Invention, never known
before in these Countries.

Then he repeated a Passage of Hi-
story relating to Matthew, who at his
first setting up for a Prophet, was desired by
the Elders of a certain Neighbouring
Town to solve them a Thousand Difficulties
proposed unto him, in order to assure them
that his Mission was Heavenly, and
that he was divinely inspir'd; and upon his
Non performance, they suspected his Do-
ctrine to be no more than fancied Hy-
pocrite, mix'd with a great deal of crazy im-
agination: But immediately the Angel
Gabriel, appearing at his Right hand, told
all these puzzling Questions, possibl'd in
a separate Volume called *Adam's Mission*
and illustrated out of *Scripture* into *Matthew's*
and I will conclude, you answer to just, and
fully to all Questions propos'd unto you, that
one should suspect that you have the Al-
lance of some former Demon, or other
wonderful power, which is not to be

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Conference XIX.

Of the Plurality of Wives among the Mahometans; and of the different manner of propagating their Religion and ours.

Between some *Mahometans*, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Nineteenth of *January*, some *Mahometans* from remote Parts visiting us, desired us to bestow upon them some little printed Book or other; and ask'd us, why we could not reach the People without the Help of printed

printed Books? And if every Man was not capable by his own Light of Reason, to attain to so much Knowledge as was necessary for the Conduct of his Life, in order to please God, and save his Soul from the Punishments of the next World?

Had our first Parents, answer'd I, remain'd in their primitive State of Integritty, I would answer you in the Affirmative; but upon their Disobedience, they lost the Image of God, consisting in Knowledge and true Holiness; and are forced to make use of Books, Masters and many more Helps, to attain the necessary Knowledge of Salvation, that they may think always of their Duty, and keep their God, and Christ their Redeemer, always in their Minds, and before their Eyes.

And then I ask'd them, how their Wives came to have any Knowledge in Religious Matters, seeing they were neither sent to School, nor permitted to frequent the *Mosques* to hear Sacerdotal Instructions.

They answer'd, 'tis not the Custom among us, that Women learn to Read and Write; nor are our Women admitted to frequent any publick Company where Men are present, as among you Christians; tho' now
and

and then, our Priests are admitted to teach the Women in their own Houses.

By all this Reservedness, said I, you would make the World believe, that you are very Chaste in all your Conversations; How comes it then that your Law admits of having so many Wives and Concubines?

He answer'd, Fornication is severely punished among us, and is accounted a very great Sin; whereof if either Man or Woman is convicted, he is sent for by the Priest, who is oblig'd to give the offending Party a hundred *Bastinado's*: Therefore this Sin is rarely to be found among us *Mahometans*. As for *Mahomet's* permitting a *Plurality of Wives*, in proportion to every Man's Faculty and Circumstances in the World; 'tis a good Law, destructive of the Sin of Fornication, and preventing all its dismal Consequences in any well-regulated Society.

I urg'd, that this was against the first Institution of Marriages: For God gave but one Wife to *Adam*, though at the same time they had an express Precept for Increasing and Multiplying: Therefore 'tis your unconfin'd British Lusts have laid the Foundation for this unreasonable Incontinency.

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The *Mahometan* reply'd, By no means, Sir; For this was the Practice of many holy Prophets, own'd by the Christians as such, before our Prophet *Mahomet* was born.

I answer'd, Saints and Prophets had all of them their Imperfections; but we are not to be Imitators of their Vices, but of their Vertues and Excellencies: But shew me where any of the Prophets taught for Doctrine, the Lawfulness of having many Wives? It follows then, that the Impostor did it, as one of the best Stratagems, accompanied with bloody Wars, likely to propagate his wicked Opinions among an ignorant Lascivious Nation at his first setting up for Prophet and Legislator: Whence you may easily see the great difference between our Religion and yours, in the manner of their being propagated among many Nations.

Pray, how was the Christian Religion propagated among the Gentiles, said the *Mahometan*?

Through Persecution, and Sufferings, and cruel Deaths of many Thousand of its Professors: Moreover, by Ways and Means of Love and Gospel-persuasives, encouraging all to read the holy Scripture, containing the

the Prophecies relating to the promised *Messias*; whereas you forbid the reading of the *Alcoran*, and discourage Men from such Studies as may be helpful to them in discovering the gross Errors of their Carnal Religion.

What you say, is very true, reply'd he; yet for all that, a Man may be sav'd in our Religion: For we hold the Existence of One only God, and believe the Necessity of Good Works to be practis'd in an uninterrupted Course of a vertuous and a sober Conversation. We know, that many of us are rebellious and disobedient, and therefore must be punished in Hell hereafter; whence however, after some Duration of Time, the Prophet will graciously deliver them all, when the Time of the *Restitution of all Things* shall come, when this World shall be destroyed, and a new one erected in its Room.

To this I answer'd, What you say of *Mahomet's* relieving damned Souls from Hell, is very false and ridiculous: For after this Life, there is no Place for Repentance; and 'tis therefore we are commanded by God to repent of all our Sins, and believe in Christ, while we are yet alive, and can give sufficient Testimony to the World of the Sincerity of our Intention, by our manifestly
declaring

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declaring War against Sin, and leading pious and honest Lives worthy of our holy Profession. And as for *Mahomet's* redeeming you from Hell, do but read the History of his wicked Life, and then believe, if you can, that such an Impostor is ever able to deliver thence his own Soul.

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Conference XX.

Of the Malabarian Sacred Law-Books, Astrology, and of many other Particulars.

Between some *Malabarian* Priests, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries:

ON the Eighteenth of *January*, as I was walking in the Streets, I saw a Priest reading to a great Concourse of Merchants, who heard him very attentively; and putting my self among the Auditors, I ask'd what Book'twas he read?

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He answer'd, 'tis *Kandapuranu*; or an History-Book.

Do you believe for Truth all the Contents of that Book, said I unto him?

Yes, reply'd he; for 'tis a Treatise explanatory of our Sacred Law.

Then I took him to task, and shew'd, that 'twas but a continued Poetical Fiction from the Beginning to the End, and thwarting all the Attributes of the Supreme Being, and destructive of good Morals in all the Youth who assist at the reading thereof.

But, Sir, said he, this Book speaks of some Achievements and Heroick Actions of the Gods, not only in this, but in the other World, where our Poets have never been; and therefore they must have had it revealed unto them by the Gods themselves; as many other Sciences had been never discovered or found out without immediate Revelation: As for Example, the Knowledge of the Heavenly Motions, of the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, the Art of Soothsaying and foretelling future Contingencies: All these things we learn from the Gods and Invisible Beings; and all these Sciences being

ing writ in the *Kerundum* Language, known only to the *Bramans*, 'tis firmly believ'd that this was the Language of the Gods.

This *Bramish* Priestcraft, reply'd I, is too palpable to merit a Confutation : For with one half of a Thought you'll perceive, that 'tis only to derive divine Veneration and Respect to all the lying Extravagancies writ in that Language, by impudently affirming it to be the common Dialect of the Gods ; which, as 'tis in it self a false Assertion ; so 'tis a solid Proof, that your Gods are Imaginary Vanities : For God does not talk and discourse in any Language whatsoever, as we Mortals do ; which argues our Nature very imperfect, having no other Way to know one another's Thoughts ; which without Blaspheming, can't be said of the All-wise God, who knoweth our Thoughts afar off. And as to what you say, that *Astronomy* and other Sciences have been invented by your Gods and Spiritual Beings ; this is likewise false and ridiculous : For all the Knowledge of the Motion of Celestial Bodies, of the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, is attained by Study and Observation ; as all other Arts and Sciences are acquir'd among Men : But as to what you say of Magick and Soothsaying, and foretelling of future Contingencies, they are no Arts

nor Sciences, being not grounded upon any certain Truths; but mere wild lying Conjectures, contributing very much to render our Lives uncomfortable when disappointed by the Hope of good things never to be attain'd; and frighted with the Fear of Evil that will never come to pass.

The Priest made no Reply to all this; but said, all Religions come from God, and are approv'd of by him: For we find among our selves (*Malabarians*) Three Hundred and sixty Sorts or Sects of Religions; and that 'tis much the same among you *Christians*, we are very much inclin'd to believe; because the *Portugueze* have Images in their Temples, and Ceremonies quite different from what we find among you; and we observe that there is a different Language spoke at every Fifty Miles: All which Varieties must come from God, and are acceptable unto him: For a Thousand different Roads may lead to the same Capital City, as Lines drawn from the different Points of the Circumference, all terminate in the same Centre: There may be direct and round-about Ways; and what then? if they do but lead to the King's House, my Toil and Labour is not to come into any consideration, when I shall arrive at the long wish'd for Port of Rest and Happiness.

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To this I answer'd, All these Diversities of Opinions are from our swerving from the Way of Happiness mark'd out unto Mankind by the Finger of God himself; and running astray in Ways and Roads of our own finding out, leading at last to Eternal Misery.

Then they ask'd me, if we look'd upon their Religion as false only in some Points or false in every Particular?

You believe, said I, the Existence of a *Supreme Being*, the *Immortality* of the Soul, the *Certainty* of eternal Rewards and Punishments in the next World, the *Difference* that is between Vice and Vertue, the absolute *Necessity* there is of loving the one, and avoiding the other: All these Points are, Eternal Truths, common to you and us, deeply engraven in every Man's Conscience, and can't be thence effaced by all the industrious Endeavours of vicious Minds; and therefore we never challenge you upon any of these Important Truths: But we find fault with your asserting a Plurality of Gods, your making Good and Evil to be equally deriv'd from God; and that all the Wickednesses committed in the World, are but the Pastimes and Diversions of the Almighty

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Sovereign ; your believing that you'll obtain the Remission of Sins by the Irksom Performances of ridiculous Ceremonies ; and your sitting contentedly Ignorant of the Knowledge of the Divine Will clearly revealed in his Holy Word, which I am willing to impart and make known unto every one of you. 'Tis against these abominable Errors that we contend with you, to the end you may come to the saving Knowledge of God and your selves, by *believing in his Name.*

The Priest answer'd, *Belief* is as much urg'd in our Religion, as in yours : For it would by no Means seem, or appear ridiculous to you in any of its Articles, if you did but believe it.

But, Sir, said I, you have a false Notion of *saving Faith* : For 'tis not believing all extravagant lying Traditions of designing Men ; but what the God of Truth proposes to us in his Holy Word, which is the unerring Touch-stone in all Religious Matters, that I recommend.

Some of them said, 'tis firmly believed among us, that not only all Mankind, but all Birds, and Beasts of the Fields, shall be Eternally Happy after many repeated Nativities

vities or Regenerations, qualifying them for the Enjoyment of God.

To this I answer'd, that as they are not capable of knowing and worshipping God here, so are they less capable of enjoying him hereafter; and therefore this must be a very wild and groundless Conjecture.

...of Regeneration, purifying them for
the Enjoyment of God
To this I answer, that as they are not
capable of knowing and worshipping God
as he is, they are therefore of no use
in the service; and therefore this must be a
very will and goodly Consequence.

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Conference XXI.

Of their Washings and Purifications ; and of the Doctrine of Fate so much cultivated among them.

Between a *Braman*, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Twenty ninth of *January*, I walk'd out into one of the neighbouring Villages, where very many *Bramans* assembled to hear my Discourse ; among whom there was one very famous for his Skill in the Art of Conjuring and Soothsaying ; and besides, was an excellent Orator ; and having then finish'd
their

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their Ordinary Washings, and but just come out of the Water, I ask'd them, how daily Dipping and Plunging did avail them? Do you, besides the cleansing your Bodies, propose by so doing, the purifying of your Souls?

He answer'd, we believe the Water to be a God, and the most gracious and beneficent of all the Deities, to us Mortals, purifying our Souls, as well as our Bodies, when accompanied with the ordinary Ceremonies, and with the established *Formula's* of devout Prayers.

I grant, said I, that Water is one of the constituent Parts of all animate and inanimate things, and very serviceable to all visible Beings; but for all this, 'tis no God, but a very excellent Creature, pointing out to you that the Maker thereof must be infinitely more Excellent and Glorious; and for not arguing thus like Creatures endued with Understanding, you conclude, that all excellent Things must be Gods; and this false Logick is the Source of all your innumerable false Gods. Mean while, I intimated, that the Use of *Baptism* or sprinkling of Water among *Christians*, for the washing away Original Sin, was only *symbolical*, representing unto our Faith the precious Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which purifieth
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the Conscience from Dead Works; and as we are dipp'd in Water, so we are purg'd with Christ in Baptism, that we may rise with him to a Newness of Life; and not that Water, properly and materially speaking, can wash away our Sins, and purifie our immaterial Spirits.

He added, as there are different Medicaments here from those of *Europe*, in order to cure Bodily Diseases; so God makes use of different Ceremonies and Religious Institutions, to cure the spiritual Diseases of the Soul.

I answer'd, that Comparison has no Place in this Matter; For the Difference of Climates and that of Human Bodies, do rationally call for different Methods of Cure; but God, the Object of Adoration, is every where, and at all times the same; and Mens Minds are equally (with due Culture and Attention) disposed to Fear and Love him as their God and Sovereign Good.

One of them answer'd, all comes from the Absolute Decrees of Heaven; we can't do otherwise than we do: For while we are yet in the Mother's Womb, we are form'd and shap'd for Vice or Vertue, for this or that Religion: For Example; six Children born of the same Mother, blessed with the same
careful

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careful Education, brought up under the same Discipline, yet but one of them very likely, which proves to be an honest Man; and all the rest will become wicked and vicious. This can't be otherwise accounted for, than by resolving all to the unchangeable, uncontroul'd Orders of the Almighty, who will have it so, and no otherwise.

I answer'd, that God created in the Beginning every thing very good in its kind; but Man (as I have shewn on another Occasion) abusing his Free Will, rebelled against God, and thereupon lost the Power of doing what is acceptable and pleasing to God, without the immediate Aids of Divine Grace, offer'd to all of us through Jesus Christ: But Mankind being bent upon Evil, and blinded in the Spirit of their Minds, neglect the Offer of Grace and Pardon, made unto them through a Redeemer; and hence it is, that there are more wicked and bad Men in the World, than there are honest and vertuously inclin'd.

The People cried out, Sir, 'tis all true what you say; and we have learnt more of you, than we have of the *Bramans* all the time of our Lives; for they never come near us, unless to eat and drink at Weddings and Buryings, to receive their Dole of boil'd Rice

Rice and Clothes, that at such times are distributed among them ; and the poorer sort of Families dare not so much as appear in their Neighbourhood, because they call themselves *Holy Men* ; and other poor Families they call *Common* and *Unclean*.

Then some of the *Bramans* reprov'd the People, and said, they had neither Honour nor Modesty, in daring to talk so of their *Holy Order*, and in neglecting to bestow upon them a Competent Maintenance, that they might discharge the several Duties of their high and heavenly Office, without the Distraction of worldly Cares : And as for their not conversing with some sort of Men, 'twas because they fear'd to be defiled by them ; seeing they were *Bareyers*, that eat *Cows-Flesh*, and other forbidden Meats ; and therefore Men, who can't be saved in the other World.

I answer'd, if you are poor, 'tis to your Gods you must attribute the Cause of your Poverty, and not to the People, who make you very considerable Allowances ; but you offer it in Sacrifices to your Idols, which you should rather offer to hungry Stomachs : And as to the People you call *Bareyers*, or *unclean*, I dare say, that they are much more useful to the Government than you *Bramans* ;
for

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for they are very laborious, not alham'd to do the meanest Drudgeries ; which, though mean and slavish, yet must be done by some or other ; and why for their Pains they must be called Unclean by the Standers-by, I can't conceive : And I yet more wonder at the Men whom you bid stand off, because you are holier than they, and excommunicate from the Favour of God in the World that is to come, as well as from your Company in this ; it would be strange, I say, if those Men would have any Respect for you *Brahmans*.

You guess very well, said a *Braman* : There is an eternal Hatred between us and the *Bareyers* : For we are descended from the God *Biruma*, and designed for the Joys of Heaven ; but they are the Off-spring of some Earthly-minded Men, and are ordained for the Torments of Hell and eternal Misery ; and 'tis therefore in pursuance to this *Odium*, they affront us openly, and very often have the Impudence to throw Stones at us, when we are passing by their Habitations.

I told him, that 'twas his Pride that puff'd him up ; and that this Idle Lazy Life gave them a handle to insult poor industrious Men, who get their living by the Sweat of their Brows.

Then

Then he said, that he, by the help of his Skill in *Magick*, could compel the Devil to do, or say what he pleased ; which was an Argument that their Law and *Formula's* of Prayers were more efficacious than ours, seeing we could not controul the Devil as he could.

I answer'd, that according to our holy Law, Witches and Wizards are condemned as the most profligate Men in the World, inasmuch as that they had made a secret Contract with the Devil, the Enemy of God, and of the Souls of Men. Then I proceeded to enlarge on this Head, and spake very fully of the Marks, and infallible Characters distinguishing the true Law of God from the Lying Laws calculated to the Interest of worldly-minded Men, whose Business 'twas to impose upon the rest of their Fellow-creatures.

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Conference XXII.

*Of the Laws of Moses ; and
of the Gospel, &c.*

Between Two *Mahometan* Priests,
and one of the *Danish* Missiona-
ries.

ON the Thirty first of *January*, I was visited by two *Mahometan* Priests, the one of them a neighbouring Priest ; but the other came from *Agar*, the Residence of the great *Mogul*. They began to tell me, how God had at several times raised up Prophets to instruct the People, and to guide them in the Ways of Truth and Holiness ; and more especially, said they, we own four Great

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Prophets, immediately sent from God, to reform this wicked World from the Evil of their Ways ; the first whereof was *Moses*, the second *David*, the third *Jesus*, and the fourth *Mahomet* : Pray tell us, said they, which of the Four do you look upon to be the Greatest, and take for your Guide in Matters of Religion ?

'Tis confess'd by all *Christians*, answer'd I, that *Moses*, *David*, and *Jesus*, were great Prophets ; whereof the last was not only a Prophet, but the Son of the living God, and the Redeemer of Mankind : And as to what you say, that the Three forementioned Prophets gave three different Laws to Mankind, and *Mahomet* came to give the World a fourth Law, different from those of *Moses*, *David*, and *Jesus Christ* ; in all this you grossly mistake : For the Writings of the Royal Prophet *David*, and the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*, are but Explications of the Law of *Moses* ; and all put together, with the inspired Writings of all the other Prophets, make but one just entire Body, or Doctrine of all the things necessary to be believed and practis'd for the attaining eternal Happiness : And though we don't observe the Ceremonial Part of the *Mosaical* Law ; yet we read it attentively, inasmuch as those Ceremonies were Types and Shadows of the promised *Messias* ; and there-

therefore the *Old* and *New Testament* make up One Compleat *Christian Institution*: But as for the *Alcoran* compos'd by *Mahomet*, 'tis partly taken out of the Writings of our holy Bible, and partly out of the Books of *Pagans*, mix'd with many of his own Extravagancies, as may be clearly seen by any discerning Reader: Therefore *Mahomet* gave the World no new Law; but dismembred, mangled, and corrupted the Laws of *Moses*, and the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*.

But, 'tis certain, quoth the *Mahometan*, that there is a great Conformity between your Religion and ours, with this only Difference; we believe *One*, and you a *Trinity* of Gods.

Then I explain'd unto him at large, the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and the Two Natures of Christ.

Well, quoth he, if once you receive such Opinions for Articles of Faith, I doubt not, but you'll find Arguments and plausible Testimonies to defend your Point; though this Doctrine of the *Trinity* has neither *Moses*, *David*, nor *Isnabi* (*Jesus*) for its Author.

Here I stopp'd them, by producing many plain Texts of Scripture, both out of the Books of *Moses*, and out of the New Testament ; proving the Truth of the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity.

Here the *Mahometan* reply'd, I have not read your Books ; therefore 'tis to little purpose to answer me with Passages out of Books I never saw ; but put the case, that this Doctrine was expressly writ in your Bible (which yet some Christians themselves deny ;) but seeing that it thwarts the Light of Reason, 'tis to be rejected : For it gives an Handle to Christians to go back to Idolatry, and worship Graven Images and a Plurality of Gods ; as 'tis but too visible in your *Portuguese* Christians, who live in these Countries : For they worship Graven Images in their Temples, as the *Heathens* do.

I shew'd him, that this Doctrine was neither against the Unity of God, nor against Reason ; but that 'twas a great Mystery transcending finite Reason, we freely grant ; because the Nature of an infinite Being can't be comprehended by our finite Reason, and created Understandings : And as for your mentioning the Danger we are in of falling into *Idolatry*, be assur'd, that we are as
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Great Enemies to Idol-Worship, as the *Mahometans* themselves: For we have no other Business in these Countries, but to bring the *Heathens* from the Worshipping many Imaginary Idol-Deities, to the Knowledge of the One only true God, and his Son *Jesus Christ*, whom he hath sent into World to save Mankind from the Guilt and Punishment due to their Sins. But because some *Christians* deny Christ to be the everlasting Son of God; and others worship Graven Images; must that induce you to reject his Doctrine of the *Trinity*, while you your selves believe a thousand incomprehensible Absurdities of your Prophet *Mahomet*, that affront common Sence, and trample Reason under foot? For don't you give divine Worship to *Mahomet*, though you acknowledge him to be a mere Man?

We give him no Divine Worship, reply'd he; but revere him as our Law-giver; and direct our Intentions to *Mahomet's* God, who was pleas'd to make use of him to call us from Heathenism.

I answer'd, it appears by the whole Tenor of your Carriage and Demeanour, that you adore *Mahomet* as much, if not more than God himself, because he is always in your Mouths, and always mention'd in your

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Prayers ; which you never do with regard to *Moses, David, and Christ*, whom you allow to be Prophets sent from God to reform the sinful World. Moreover, you say, that he was Existing before the Creation of the World ; and that all things were created for his sake : All this I shew'd them out of their own Writings translated into the *Malabarian* Tongue.

They desired me to rehearse all the Points which Christians esteem erroneous in their Religion.

I gave them a long Catalogue immediately ; among which, I mention'd *Polygamy*, as destructive both of *Moses's* and *Jesus Christ's* Doctrine ; both whom they allow to have been sent from God to Teach his Ways in Truth and Sincerity to the Children of Men.

Polygamy, said they, is neither against sound Doctrine, nor against the Light of Natural Reason ; but we look upon it as a laudable Custom, acceptable to God, and useful to Human Society : For a Man peoples both this World, and that which is to come, with more New Inhabitants, than if he had married but One Wife only ; And 'tis therefore that God has
Created

Created more Women than Men ; and by *Polygamy* the World is peopled with New Colonies, and all the Women taken care of.

This their Opinion, both by Reason and Scripture, I confuted; and shew'd them, that 'twas so plain a Truth, that the Heathens kept still to the first Institution of Marriage, and condemn *Polygamy* as the Effect of Untam'd Lust and Unbridled Incontinency : And that there are more Women than Men in the World, is groundless, and against daily Experience : For 'tis very reasonable to believe, that both Sexes, as to their Number, come up very near to an Equality, if we consider the great Number of Men dying by the Sword, or drowned in the mighty Waters, or sent abroad upon other Expeditions, useful to the Society.

They made no Reply to all this ; but ask'd, what I thought of the Way and Manner of remitting Sins?

Q 4

Here.

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Hereupon I made a long Discourse, shewing how *Sin* came first into the World; and how Man by Sin being obnoxious to the Wrath of God, did stand in need of a *Redeemer*: Which gave me occasion to explain to them the Doctrine of *Justification* and *Forgiveness of Sins*, by the Free Grace of God, and not by any Works that we our selves can do, without the Divine Concurrence of assisting Grace; which enables us to repent, and turn to God, conquering our Stubbornness, and making us willing to run in the Ways of God's Commandments. And then I desired to know how Pardon of Sins was attained, according to the Principles of *Mahometans*?

Some Sins, said they, are blotted out, and pardoned, by the Offenders receiving an Hundred *Bastinado's*; some by Forty, and some Sins are by Death only aton'd for; some Sins are pardon'd, in consideration of pecuniary Mulets and Fines, and by doing long Penances, and shewing Mercy towards the Poor with more than common Liberalities.

Upon this I resum'd, and shew'd them, that this great Error was common both to them and to the *Heathens*, to think that the Guilt of Sin is pardoned by chastising
and

and mortifying the Outward Man ; when all the Austerities of Corporal Penances can only weaken the Flesh, but in no wise crucifie Sin, and renew the Inward Man.

To all this they made no Reply ; but thank'd me for my Friendly Discourse.

I made them a Present of some Books out of our Printing-House, in the *Malabarian* Tongue, and dismiss'd them.

Con-

and mourning the Lord and Man
in the wilderness of Jordan
and only weaned the flesh, but no will
against the Lord and the Lord's law

To all this they made no Reply, but
they were for ever friendly Discontent

I made them a Present of some Books
and our Printing House in the City
was bought and retained them

and they were for ever friendly Discontent

and they were for ever friendly Discontent

and they were for ever friendly Discontent

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Conference XXIII.

*Of the Goodness of God, and
of Man's Wickedness; and
of the Heathens Objections
against the Christian Re-
ligion. Their making God
the Author of Sin.*

Between many *Heathens*, and one of
the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Nineteenth of *January* I went
to one of the Neighbouring Villages,
where very many Heathens flock'd toge-
ther to hear the Preaching of the Gospel.
I spake to them of the manifold Mercies,
and Goodness of God towards the *Malaba-
rian*

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rian Nation ; and of their National Ingratitude, which, after the long Patience of Heaven, wearied with their wicked Courses, is now rewarded with condign Punishment, publick Calamities, and Afflictions with which their Land is visited.

Hereupon one of them answer'd, that God is very Good, and all Men very Evil, we all know ; but pray, tell us, how comes this Evil into the World ; and whence has it its Original ? And how can we be freed from all the Train of Miseries that attend it ? That Pride, Lying, Hatred and Disobedience are great Evils, is known by woful Experience ; but finding our selves unable to resist the active Power thereof, we conclude, that God is the Author of Sin, as well as the Author of Vertue.

Your Ignorance of the Original of Evil, is the Cause of this your prophane Opinion, that destroys the very Notion of Vertue and Goodness ; and consequently you go on quietly in the same sinful Course of Life, as pleasing and acceptable to God. Here I explain'd unto them very fully the holy Nature of God, and the Scriptural Account of the Original of Evil, and of its tremendous Consequences ; from which Christ redeemed us with his precious Blood : If we repent
of

of former Sins, and believe in his Name, and lead holy Lives worthy of the holy Precepts contained in his Gospel; 'tis then we shall be enabled to resist Sin; and quench all the fiery Darts of Satan?

But here I was interrupted by one telling me, that all what I said about the Scriptural Account of the *Original of Sin*, was nothing at all to the purpose: For these being Historical Transactions, which happened before either you or we were born, they can carry no Conviction with them: For we have very many such Histories of Things transacted by the Gods in the World preceding this; to which we neither lend much Attention, nor Belief.

You do well, said I, to dis-believe ridiculous Fables, and self-contradicting Histories, containing such monstrous Absurdities, that no Man in his Senses can hear them read with Patience: But as for the History, and Account we have of the Original of *Evil*, and of the promised *Remedy* thereof, 'tis made out so clear, by the fulfilling of the several Prophecies relating to the minutest Circumstances, in the whole Process of the Work of our Redemption, that a Man may as justly and reasonably doubt of the Existence of the ordinary Objects of Sight and Hearing, as
doubt

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doubt of the Truth of what is related in the sacred Pages of the Old and New Testament.

Here, resuming his Discourse, Sir, quoth he, 'tis a Wonder, that so wise a Man as you are, should thus go from Place to Place, to entertain People with learned Discourses, who don't much care to give you the hearing : I thought you had arriv'd at that high Degree of Wisdom, that teaches you to forsake all the vain Conversation of the ignorant *Mobile*, and lead a retired Life, as our *Hermits* and *Anchorets* do, whom we worship and revere as the wisest of Mortals, and consult them upon occasional Difficulties in their Wildernesses and Subterranean Residences, or Caves of the Earth : For they never come after us ; because such as thirst after the Knowledge of the Truth, will run after them to be instructed by them in the Precepts of Wisdom.

I return'd him the following Answer ; The great God, the Fountain of all Wisdom and Knowledge, wanting none of our Services and Performances, yet is in all Places, and at all times urging his Creatures to mind the Salvation of their Souls, and turn to him with all their Hearts, that he may blot out their Iniquities, and pardon all their Sins :
And

And if God in his Mercy did not condescend to come in quest of his Rebellious Children, 'tis more than probable, that few or none would importune him with Representations of their dangerous Circumstances, or with earnest humble Petitions for Grace and Pardon: For so great is the innate Pride of Man's Heart, that he would rather hazard his Soul, and all, than owe his Deliverance to the free Grace of God: Therefore true Wisdom consists in seeking and saving those that go astray; and the more laborious and active we are herein, the more wise we are, in imitating the Wisdom of the Almighty. And if your *Hermits* were endued with the Wisdom which comes from above, they would do as I do, teach the Ignorant, and reclaim those to the Knowledge of God, who are carried away by the Delusions of the Devil and crafty Men, who lye in wait to deceive silly Souls.

Upon this, another spake; Whenever you come to us, Sir, we are heartily glad to see you: For though we oppose you now and then, and interrupt your Discourse, assure your self, that 'tis out of a Desire to have things yet more clearly stated, and some little Scruples solv'd; and not out of any Spirit of Contradiction: And to deal ingenuously with you, I'll tell you what hinders the

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Progress of your Doctrine, and what renders it unacceptable to us *Malabarians*; 'tis because you are none of us, but a White *European*. If you were a Native, we would hear you chearfully.

God, said I, having Thoughts of Grace and Mercy towards this unthankful Land, so corrupted with Idolatry, and cover'd with such gross Darkness, that there is no Wise Man left among you to teach his Brethren the Knowledge of God and his Ways; has sent Men from the remotest Corners of the Earth, to explain to you his manifold Wisdom, hid from Ages and Generations, but now manifest in his Beloved Son, and our, as well as your Saviour, and common Lord, *Jesus Christ*. These Wonderful Dealings of God with you, should awaken your Attention the more, to consider, that he has not dealt thus with other Nations; neither were your Fathers instructed in the great Things of God, as you are this Day; neither did any Foreigners ever before, learn both to speak and write your Language with no other View than to promote the Welfare of your Souls, and render you acceptable in the Sight of God, your Creator. Then I concluded with Admonitions and Motives to Repentance, and to a Godly Life; and bid them all Adieu.

Con-

Conference XXIV.

Of the Heathenish Books, &c.

Between some *Heathens*, and one of
the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Fifth of *March*, some Heathens from the City of *Meiron*, came to my House, desiring me to give them some Printed Books, such as they had seen in the Hands of some of their Neighbours.

I ask'd them, of what use such Books would be to them?

To read them, and to raise Discourses thereupon, answer'd they, and wonder among our selves, how the White *Europeans* could have learnt our Language, and printed it thus, without Ink and Writing.

'Tis not, said I, to raise your Admirati-
on, that we are come here from our own
R Coun-

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Countrey, and print these Books with so much Cost and Pains-taking; but to the end we may spread among you the Knowledge of the True God, and that your selves may read the Words of Eternal Life, which are sufficient to make you wise unto Salvation: But we are very much disappointed in our Expectation; for we find, you little mind the Things that belong to your Peace, tho' brought home to your Doors, and offer'd to you without Money and without Price; while you are never wearied in reading the Wildest Extravagancies, written by lying Poets, and false Historians, who have made it their Business to impose upon too credulous Posterity.

Then, answer'd some of them, are all our Books false?

As to the Histories of your Gods sundry Apparitions, the Foundation and Grounds of your *Pagod*-Worship, said I, they are all absurd Falsities; and all the Rules and Directions there contain'd, for the attaining of Eternal Happiness, are of no use: The best Books you have, are such as treat of Vertue and Vice, and other Matters in Morality; which are pretty well written, but mix'd and dash'd with interspersed Falsities; yet none of all your Books make any
mention

mention of the Original of Man's Misery, and of the promissory Means of Salvation. And as for your Books, Astrological, Magical, &c. written to promote the Devilish Trade of *Witchcraft*, they are good for nothing, but to be committed to the Flames, inasmuch as they distract your Minds from God, and season them with the Doctrine of Devils.

Then one stood up, and said, you may rail and inveigh, as much as you please, against our Books ; yet, for what I can find, your Books have no Letters, but ours ; and no Words, but what are borrow'd from our Books, and from our Language.

'Tis very true, reply'd I, that I make use of your Words and Characters, in order to make my self intelligible to you, when I make known to you the Mysteries of Salvation, which I have not borrow'd from your Writings, but from the written Word of God : For tho' your Words are very good, yet what you mean by them, is Falshood and Vanity. For Example ; you say, God is to be feared ; but then you make a Graven Image the Object of Religious Fear. The same may be said of the Words *Repentance*, *Holiness*, *Wisdom*, &c. Which Vertues you make to consist in outward Grimaces, and

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Bodily Austerities, and Self-macerations.

You are very much in the right, Sir, replied one of them: For we have only good Words left amongst us; because all real Goodness is dead and buried with our Fathers; and I am apt to believe, that 'tis much the same among the Christians: For your Phrase and Diction are smooth, polite and elegant; but your Actions are as bad as our own.

I acknowledg'd, that the Corruption of Manners was indeed at this Day overspreading the whole Face of the whole Universe; yet still with this Difference, that the Doctrines of Salvation are kept pure amongst us; and therefore they have Means ready at hand to reclaim the Disobedient from their Wickednesses: But if they continue in their Obstinacy and Rebellion against God, they are inexcusable, and God is glorified in punishing their Disobedience.

But pray let us see, cry'd out one of them, how do you demonstrate, that our Books are false?

Hereupon I nam'd their chief and principal Books relating to Religion; and repeated the Contents of every one of them, with

with many impious and monstrous Passages, *verbatim*, as therein contained ; which, accompanied with a clear and nervous Confutation of their Errors, had this good Effect upon them, that they freely confess'd, that I was faithful in my Allegations; and that they were convinced, 'twas their Duty to lead better Lives than they do. But God has made us as we are, said they, surrounded with the enticing Allurements of this World, and hurried with the Cares and Businesses of this Life, so that we really forget the Affairs of the other World, which are purely Spiritual.

Hereupon I suited my Exhortation to their Spiritual Lethargy and Lukewarmness of Temper, and dismiss'd them.

in many impositions and monstrous penalties
which, as the law is now, are so oppressive
that it is almost impossible for the poor
to be able to pay them. The poor are
not only oppressed by the law, but also
by the clergy, who are so avaricious
that they will take any money they can
get, and will not spare any for the poor.
The poor are also oppressed by the
landlords, who are so greedy that they
will take any money they can get, and
will not spare any for the poor. The
poor are also oppressed by the
law, which is so oppressive that it is
almost impossible for the poor to be able
to pay them. The poor are also
oppressed by the clergy, who are so
avaricious that they will take any money
they can get, and will not spare any for
the poor. The poor are also oppressed
by the landlords, who are so greedy that
they will take any money they can get,
and will not spare any for the poor.

Conference XXV.

*Of the Heathen Feast-Days.
What Thoughts they conceive
of the Christian Faith.
Of Marriage, &c.*

Between some *Bramans*, and one of
the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Ninth of *March*, being a
Festival among the *Heathens*, I
went into one of their *Pagods*,
towards the Evening, which I
found much crouded ; and ask'd the *Bra-*
mans, upon what Account they celebrated
this Day in those pompous Solemnities of
carrying their Idol-Gods about the Streets ?

The *Bramans* answer'd, 'tis an *Ancient*
Custom received from our Ancestors, which
we are obliged to observe very religiously,

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without the least Alteration ; tho' if we were left to our Choice, we would abolish many such unnecessary Ceremonies, as no ways contributing to the attaining of Divine Wisdom. Another *Braman* added, If our way of Worship is considered only outwardly, it may indeed, to an indifferent Beholder, seem very ridiculous ; but if it be considered in its more Spiritual and inward Intention, every wise Man must judge very advantageously of our publick Way of Worship.

This gave me a fit Handle to speak very Copiously of the first Institution of *Festivals*, and how they abused the Design and End of this first laudable Institution, by spending the Day in Luxury and Prophaneness ; in which, I assur'd them, they greatly err'd.

A *Braman* told me, I was very much in the right ; but he was presently reprov'd by another of the Order, threatening to excommunicate him out of the Society, if he talked at that rate.

The former reply'd, 'tis dangerous to speak as one thinks.

Then I spake publickly, and said, 'tis past all Dispute, that many wise Men amongst you do not approve of this way of Pompous
and

of the Heathen Feast-Days, &c. 249

and Ceremonious Worship, as contributing to the attaining of Happiness or solid Wisdom; and are really ashamed of it as most ridiculously foppish; tho' in the mean time they are still more ashamed to be hooted at by the Mob, for owning the Truth in opposition to the many Great and Mighty, who love to follow the Multitude to do Evil: Whereas our Lord and Master *Jesus Christ* teaches us, that whoever loves *Father and Mother more than him, can't be one of his Disciples.*

Whereupon a School-master asked me, if according to our Laws, we were obliged to hate our Parents?

I answer'd, Yes, when they hinder us to love God; for the Respect we owe to them, comes in competition to that we owe to our dear Redeemer; and in this Case we must obey God rather than Man: But otherwise we are commanded to give Parents and Superiors all due Reverence, according to the respective Relations we bear to them.

Then stood up another *Braman*, asking me, if all should be saved, that were baptiz'd in the Name of Christ?

To

To whom I return'd this Answer ; We have in our Hands all the necessary Means of Salvation, by which all Men may be saved ; but if they abuse the Grace of God, and are slothful in working out their own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, Sin lies at their own Door, and their Destruction comes from themselves.

Then said the *Braman*, what advantage is there in embracing your Religion, since I find, I may be damned in yours, as well as in my own ?

Then I ask'd them, but how can you demonstrate, that you have the Doctrine of Salvation ?

One argued the Point from Antiquity ; another from the Multitude that profess'd their Religion ; a third alledged the mighty Wonders done by their Gods ; the fourth urg'd the Incapacity of the *Bramans* then and there present, to argue pertinently upon Matters of so great Importance ; but desir'd me to travel through the Country, visit Places of Devotion, and converse with their Great and most Learned *Bramans* ; and that then, he questioned not, but I would be tho-

thoroughly convinc'd of the Truth of their Religion.

Hereupon I shew'd them, that all Arguments fetch'd from Antiquity, Numbers of Professors, and Universality and Extensiveness of any Religion, were trivial and inconclusive; and then proceeded to shew, that their Religion was false, and to be forthwith abandoned.

Many assented to all I said; and were ashamed to have been of the Number of its Professors; others did urge the *Bramans* to defend their *Thesis*, and answer my Arguments.

The *Bramans* contented themselves with saying, that there are many things in the Christian, as well as in their Religion, that are not capable of a Demonstration; but are to be received by Faith: For does not it seem the Height of Unreasonableness to suppose him to be the Saviour of the World, who was of a mean Parentage, had but as mean an Education, persecuted by his Country-men, and at last was hang'd by publick Authority upon an infamous Cross?

Then

Then a School-master urged against me the different *Seas* of Christians.

I reply'd, that all the Christians agree in owning the Existence of One only Supreme Being, and his Word to be the Rule of their Lives and Practice; tho' 'twas true, that some have brought in many of their own Inventions.

Why then, said one of the Assistants, you should first bring things to rights among your selves, before you undertake the Reformation of Foreign Nations.

A *Braman* added, verily the Difference between you and us is very inconsiderable: For you must die, and so must we; you urge the Necessity of good Works, so do we; and as we are great Sinners before the Lord, so are you: And, in short, none of your Grandfathers, any more than ours, are come back from the Habitations of the Dead, to give us a true Account of those that are damned, or of such as are eternally happy in the other World.

I reply'd, you argue upon false Supposition, that there is a Space of Time left for Repentance after this Life is ended; and therefore
you

you neither fear Death, nor Hell ; and leave all Issues of Happiness and Misery, to Guesses and Peradventures.

Hereupon an old Man spake, Sir, you are yet a single Man, and unacquainted with the carking Cares accompanying a Marriage-Life, which distract us from attending the Duties of Religion.

The Marriage-State being God's own Institution, can be no Hindrance to a holy Life, said J.

Then another ask'd me, why they were Black and we White ?

I answer'd, that the first Parents of us all were created White : For 'tis Evident, that White will be made Black ; but Black can take no other Hue ; but the natural Reason of their Blackness is the scorching Heat of the Climate, which has that Effect upon Human Bodies.

Con-

Conference XXVI.

About several Particulars relating to Religion.

*Between a Malabarian Merchant, and
one of the Danish Missionaries.*

ON the Fourteenth of *March*, I came into a Place, where they were celebrating their Ceremonies; and finding there a Concourse of People, I spake to them of the manifold Riches of the Grace of God, which were now offered to them at their Doors: But I had no sooner ended my Discourse, when a Merchant stood up, and said, We persuade our selves that we are a very happy People; our Gods love us, and we love and adore our Gods; we have a Form of Publick Worship, established among us by Publick Authority; we are a Wise, Understanding People, enjoying all sorts of Temporal and Spiritual Gifts at the liberal Hands of God; we

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we live in a well-regulated Society, under a very wise Magistracy; and, in short, we want for nothing that can be thought conducive to the Happiness of Soul or Body: And therefore we wonder very much at the *Europeans*, who make it their Business to inveigh against our Religion, and rail at our Gods with bitter Satyrs. What, do you look upon us to be Monsters or Devils? Have not we Wisdom and Understanding, as well as any of you, visible enough in all sorts of Manufactures prepared by the Industry of the Inhabitants; and for its Goodness and Beauty, coveted by the *Europeans*, and had in high Esteem amongst them? What then can you pretend, and what should move you to change our Laws and Religion?

I grant, said I, that in relation to Trade, and the Things of this Life, you are a very understanding People, and no ways inferior to any the wisest Nation: And I would have you know, that we never blame your Understandings upon this account; but when we consider your gross Errors and Idolatry, we can't but say, and affirm, that you are the most ignorant and blind among Men, in the Things relating to God and the other World.

If

If so, said he, how does God permit and suffer our Religion to take Root, and flourish in this Land, for so many thousand Years ?

God, reply'd I, is good and gracious towards all irrational Creatures, tho' they never petition for Food, nor pray for their daily Sustenance; yet he opens his liberal Hands, and feedeth every living Creature with Food convenient for him; and besides, this is neither the Place, nor Time to reward and punish every one according to his Deeds: God reserves to himself all the infinite incircling Ages of Eternity, for distributing of Rewards and Punishments; therefore his long-suffering with your Folly and Weaknesses, is no Proof of the Truth of your established Religion?

Be it so, quoth he; but all things come from the Hands of God, both Good and Evil.

'Tis true, said I, that God *permits* Evil, but is not the Cause thereof: For I don't believe, that if a Thief breaks in this Night into your Warehouse, and steals thence your best Effects, you would say, that God brake in and stole your Goods; but you would seek after the Thief, and see him punished

S

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nished as the only Author of the Robbery, willingly, and designedly, without any external Impulse to break into your Warehouse ; Whereas if the Thief had been necessitated thereto, he is no more guilty, than consuming Flames or Inundations, that ruine very often Cities and whole Provinces : Therefore God is the Cause of all that is truly good ; but we our selves, and the Devil, are the Cause of all that is morally evil.

Then, said he, why don't you drive this Devil out of the Countrey, that causes so much Mischief amongst us ?

If you desire earnestly to be free from the Devil's Tyranny, reply'd I, resolve to accommodate your selves to all the Commandments of God's written Law ; and then, by Divine Assistance, we shall be able enough to destroy all the Works of the Devil, and drive him, not only from the Land, but likewise from your Hearts, where now he rules with despotick Authority.

All you say, answer'd another, is very true ; and we can easily guess what you would be at ; you would, Sir, root out of the Land our established Religion, and introduce your own in its room, by strength of Reason, and Elo-

Eloquence: But pray Sir, know, that we, and you are born in very different Climates, educated under different Governments and Institutions; we differ in our Clothes, in our Way of Eating, Drinking, and in cultivating Sciences; and as long as these Differences are remaining between you and us, 'tis more than probable, that your and our Religion will continue to be still very different Religions, and very good both of them, for different Countries.

I reply'd, we come to you in the Spirit of Meekness and Love; we compel none of you to embrace our Opinions; we only lay the great Things of God that belong to the making you happy here and hereafter, in the strongest Light possible, and then appeal to your own Understandings, answering at the same time your many weak and little Objections offer'd against the Christian Doctrine; whereof the present Objection is very inconsiderable, viz. your arguing from the Difference of *Manners* and outward *Habitudes*, to a necessary Difference in Religion: For if you did turn Christians, it would be no way necessary for you to change your Way of eating and drinking, and your daily Manner of dealing with your Neighbours: We urge you to turn only from the Worship of Idols, to Worship the true God *in Spirit and in Truth*:

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And as for other Differences in outward Behaviour, between you and us, they are consistent with that Unity of Belief in Christ, and with the Union of Charity and Love, which is all that is required of us in relation to Matters of Religion : We neither come to change your Government, nor your Language.

Then the Merchant stood up, and said, I heartily beg Pardon for my contradicting you so violently : For I did it to no other end, but to see if I could once put you into a Fit of Anger ; for many told me, that you were never seen to be in a Passion in any Publick Dispute.

I answer'd, Physicians and good Surgeons never quarrel with their Patients ; but bear patiently with all their Impotency of Mind and Peevishness of Temper : For their Business is to cure the Distempers of the Body with Gentleness and Sweetness of Behaviour ; and 'tis mine to cure the Diseases of the Soul with all Long-suffering and Patience : And with these and the like Expressions, I dismissed them.

Con.

Conference XXVII.

*Of the several Excuses offer'd
by the Heathens, for not
receiving the Christian Re-
ligion.*

Between some Heathen Fishermen,
and one of the *Danish* Missiona-
ries.

ON the Seventeenth of *May*, I pass'd
through three different Villages
belonging to Fishermen, preach-
ing to them the Words of e-
ternal Life.

In the first Village I preached about the
Corruption of Human Nature, and of the
Necessity of a Redeemer; and when I had end-
ed my Discourse, one of them stood up, and
said; Sir, what you say, is very true and

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reasonable ; and could we but lead such Lives as you have now described, we would be of the Number of your Disciples ; but seeing we are a very poor and indigent People, we are not concern'd in what you say ; our Time, tho' spent altogether in Fishing, and other Hard Labour, does scarcely afford us daily Bread ; and how can we spend time about the Things of the other Life, whereof we are altogether ignorant ? And did we embrace your Religion, it would cost us a great deal of time in the learning of it, and we must be all our Lives oblig'd to frequent your Church once a Week ; which would also take up a great part of our time. We are contented to tread in our Fathers steps, in this, and keep them Company in the next World ; we are not ambitious of being happier in the other World than our Fathers are.

Your Poverty, said I, is no Reason why you should neglect your eternal Interest ; but you should endeavour to be rich towards God, that you may have that Rest and Happiness in the next, which you can't expect to enjoy in this World ; which if you do, you'll find, that your Lives even here on Earth will be made easier to you : For *Godliness has the Promise of this Life, and of that which is to come.* And as for your Forefathers being Heathens, ignorant of God and Christ,

Christ, 'tis no Encouragement for you to be the like, and to reject the Offers of the Grace and Mercy offer'd you this day : For you must consider, that it is probable, if your Fathers had had the same Offer and Tender of Grace, and Pardon of Sin, as you have this Day, they had repented in Sackcloth and Ashes, and turned to the Lord their God, and burn'd their Images and Idols in the Fire.

Hereupon they were call'd into the Town to carry about the Streets their Gods, in great Carts made for that purpose ; from which I dissuaded them very earnestly ; but they answered, that if they did refuse, they should be cruelly handled by their Superiors, and it may be, banish'd the Town,

Thence I came to another Village, where I found them employ'd in mending their Nets, and a little Boy entertaining them with reading the History of one of their Gods desperately fallen in love with a Woman, with whom he had his familiar Intrigues ; and immediately I took thence occasion to convince them of the Falsity and Wickedness of their Religion ; because it admitted, and allow'd of such Gods, who by their Example and Authority, contribute to render Men worse than

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than Devils, both in all sorts of bodily Uncleaness, and spiritual Wickednesses.

They said, we know no better ; for we have no Priest among us to give us any Tincture of Religion and Piety ; and the Boy that reads that Book to us, can read no other : For this is the only Book he has learnt at School. Pray, Sir, what would you have us do ?

You must repent, answer'd I, and forsake your Dumb Idols, to worship the True and Holy God, who made Heaven and Earth.

Your Doctrine, reply'd they again, is very good and reasonable ; but alas ! we are so plung'd in the Dregs of Earthly-mindedness, that we can't disengage our selves from a thousand Obligations which tie us fast to our old Religion ; for we are, as it were, Vassals and Slaves to the Governours of the Place, to draw about the *Great Waggon*, press'd with the heavy Weight of our Idols ; and did we come over to the Tents of Christians, they would not suffer us any more to follow our ordinary Employments.

But

But all these Objections would be easily answer'd by your selves, said I, if you were earnestly in love with Truth; and you should not think and esteem your Lives dear unto you upon the account of Christ, who died for you. Then exhorting them to the Consideration of their Ways, I bid them adieu; and going to a third Village, I ask'd some of the Inhabitants, wherein consisted their Divine Worship?

We have none, reply'd they; and know little or nothing of God, or of the Way of Worship; neither do we trouble our selves with these Matters: For we are a poor, perverse sort of People, who spend good part of our Lives in Eating and Drinking, Marrying of Wives, and Quarrelling with one another, and the rest of the time in Fishing for the Maintenance of our Families; and when one of us dies, we think no more of him; but let him shift for himself: For we give little time to think upon what is commonly reported of Heaven and Hell, or of any other Part of God's Worship; tho' indeed, we have a little *Pagod* among us; and when we take a very great Fish, we commonly offer to our Gods the Bones thereof.

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That you confess your Ignorance, reply'd I, is good, provided that at the same time you are asham'd, and sorry for it, desiring to be instructed in the Knowledge of the true God.

One of them said, tho' you come often to see us, we are now as bad as ever ; and indeed, we are not worthy you should spend so much time and labour upon us : For we are neither capable of learning your Religion, nor of practising the same when learnt ; and therefore, if we were already made Christians, I am assur'd we should be no Ornament to your Religion : And is it not better both for you and us, to remain where we are ; and throw our selves upon the infinite Mercies of a gracious God ; and let him do with us what he pleases?

I shew'd them the Absurdity of this Opinion, and told them, that 'twas God alone can turn the Hearts of the Children of Men, and not they themselves ; and exhorted them not to despise the Offers of Grace that God was pleas'd to make them at this time ; and that the Word of God which they heard, was efficacious and powerful to convert the Soul, and to wean them from all Earthly Engagements to sinful Pleasures, or
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Temporal Considerations; and to give Knowledge and Understanding to the Simple, making them a willing People in the Day of his Power.

Upon this I recommended them to God, and bid them adieu.

Con-

Conference XXVIII.

Containing Answers to Thirteen Questions propos'd by them.

Between some *Heathens* and *Mahometans*, and one of the *Danish* Missionaries.

ON the Nineteenth of *May*, we were visited by some *Malabarians* and *Mahometans*, who ask'd me the following Questions: 1. If there was but one Religion in the World that was every way true, and free from erroneous Opinions? 2. If 'tis right to despise and condemn all Religions that we don't profess our selves? 3. If 'tis God's Will and Pleasure to give the same Revelations to all the different Nations of the Earth? 4. If God is a Respector of Persons? 5. Whence comes it

it that the Wicked prosper, when at the same time the Godly are sorely afflicted?

6. If 'tis possible for a Man to live without Sin, all the time he is in this World? 7. If Men can do any thing against the Will of God; or if all their Actions are performed by his Efficacious Working? 8. If *Fate* or *Destiny* has more Influence upon Human Actions, than the moral Precepts of Laws commanding Good and forbidding Evil? 9. Whence comes it that a Man follows evil Practices, tho' he knows 'tis his Duty to act otherwise? 10. If a Man can direct his Prayer to God, without the Intervention of Graven Images? 11. Is not the Christian Doctrine of the *Trinity* inconsistent with the Unity of the Supreme Being? 12. When did the Christian Religion first commence? 13. What Religion did the *Europeans* observe before Christianity came to be settled among them?

I returned proper Answers to all these Questions very fully; and then in my turn, I ask'd them, how, and by what means they hop'd to be sav'd?

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The *Heathens* answer'd, by believing that among all the Gods known and ador'd among us, there is but One Supreme Being, worthy of Fear, Love and Adoration ; and by putting all our Trust in him, directing our Prayers to him, giving Alms, and by observing all the Ceremonies enjoyned by our Laws.

The *Mahometan* said, We expect Salvation, by believing, that there is but One God, and that *Mahomet* is his Prophet; That the *Alcoran* is the Word of God, containing the Doctrine of attaining Happiness; That by praying five times every Day; By doing Good, and eschewing Evil; By confessing Sins to the Priest, and undergoing what Penance he pleases to lay upon us ; By each going once in his Life to *Mecca*, if strong, and has wherewithal to defray the Charges of the Journey ; By observing the ordinary Festivals ; By going every *Friday* to the *Mosque*, and attending diligently to the reading of the *Alcoran*. He who does these things, will obtain eternal Happiness.

I answer'd, *Malabarians* and *Mahometans*, you deceive your selves, if you think that these imaginary Performances can save your Souls :

Souls : For some of these things are forbidden as superstitious ; and the other Means, viz. mere bodily Exercises, profit little to the Salvation of the Soul. But, to the end you may be saved, the Knowledge of a Redeemer is absolutely necessary to reconcile Sinners to God, by his own *passive* and *active* Obedience ; and such a Redeemer is *Jesus Christ*, who is made to us *Justification*, *Righteousness* and *Redemption*.

Here the *Malabarian* answer'd, We abound more in *good Works* than the *Christians* do.

I reply'd, For the space of Eight whole Years that I have lived among you, I see none of your *good Works* ; but what you falsely so call, are Works of Iniquity : For when you spend liberally upon the building of *Pagods*, what is this but Abomination before the Lord ? And what you give to the *Bramans*, and other *Idol Ministers*, can be no better than Mismanagement, and ill bestowed Liberalities, upon the Promoters of gross Ignorance and impious Frauds, as is owned by the Author of a Book, nam'd *T'schiaw-oikkium* ; and his Disciples, to this Day, own, that all the pompous outward Ceremonies observed among you, are of no use in attaining Everlasting Happiness.

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Hereupon some of them answer'd, Since your conversing among us, you make us, *Malabarians* and *Mahometans*, mere Scepticks in our Opinions: Whereas before your coming hither, every one was well assured of his own Religion to be free from Errors and Imperfections.

Con-

Conference XXIX.

*Of the Affairs of Europe,
and of India. Their A-
version to all Europeans,
because they eat Flesh.*

Between a *Malabarian* Prince, and some
Bramans, and one of the *Danish*
Missionaries.

ON the Twenty third of *May*, I
rode out to visit a *Naikken* (pet-
ty Prince,) whom I found in his
Garden, accompanied with some
Bramans, and many other Persons. I was
very civilly receiv'd, and entertained with
delicate Fruits, and made to sit down in a
Chair after the manner of *Europe*. And af-
ter I had assured him of my Respects, in the
most expressive Terms I was capable of,
he ask'd me several Questions in relation

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to *Europe* ; and if his *Danish* Majesty (my Gracious Sovereign) was yet living ? How numerous was the Royal Family ? Of the Extent of the *Danish* Dominions ? Of the Strong Holds, and Fortified Places ? Of the Maritime and Land-Forces ? How many Kings there were in *Europe* ? And whether other Nations, besides *Danes*, *French*, *English*, *Dutch* and *Portuguese*, could come to *India* ? And which of all these was the most powerful ? And if the Air was Temperate, that *Indians* might live therein, as *Europeans* do in *India* ? And if all the *Europeans* were Christians ? To all these, and more such like Questions, I returned proper Answers.

Then the *Bramans* began to talk of our printed Books, which had been perused by their Order, but not approved of : For one of these Books, they said, was full of Invectives against the *Bramans*, and the *Pagod-Worship*.

Thence I took occasion to vindicate those Books, and confute *Idolatry*.

Whereupon the *Braman* told me, that it was a Piece of great Insolence to blaspheme their Gods and Religion ; and that such high Crimes were intolerable.

I answer'd, We only tell you what is Truth, and what is Falshood ; and let it rest wholly in your Choice to accept the one or the other : For we use no Violence to bring you over to our Persuasion : And we can in Justice expect that Toleration and Reception in this Land which you give the *Mahometans*, who are no less Revilers of your *Idol Worship* than our selves, and incomparably more numerous than we are.

The Prince then interpos'd, and said, Your Design is laudable : For 'tis but reasonable that Wise Men should communicate their Wisdom to the Ignorant ; and in so doing, they render great Service to their Generation ; and he wish'd, there were more such Learned and Pious Men in that Countrey, to teach the People the true Way leading to Happiness.

One of the *Bramans* reply'd, if one now-a-days makes mention of Happiness, he will but expose himself to the World, and make himself the Scorn of Fools : For when I thought lately to admonish a Fisherman of his Duty of seeking after the Way leading to Bliss and Happiness, and not to spend all his time in Fishing and mending of Nets, which can do him no service in the next

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World;

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World ; Happiness in our Dialect, answer'd the Fisherman, is going to Sea, and catching Fish, and bringing them ashore when caught ; and if you will but hold your peace, and not be angry, I hope in a little time to supply you with Fish in abundance.

I ask'd the *Braman*, if he thought it unlawful to eat Fish or Flesh ?

He reply'd, that Nature has plentifully provided us with other Food, so that we have no need of eating our Fellow-Creatures ; and 'tis written in our Law, that these very Creatures, if devour'd by Men in this, will be their Tormenters in the next World, biting and tearing them with their Teeth, or trampling them under foot : And because you *Europeans* drink strong Liquors, and kill and eat your Fellow-creatures, endued with Five Senses as well as your selves, I confess, we have an inbred Aversion for you, and all that belongs to you.

I answer'd, 'tis true, that at first, Man did live upon the Produce of the Earth ; but to eat Flesh, is both agreeable to Reason and Revelation : For the living Creatures are made to serve Man, as you your selves acknowledge by your daily Practice : And many of them being incapable of doing us
any

any service (as Fish and Fowl) but by furnishing our Tables with wholesome Food; 'tis but reasonable we should exert the Power that God has given us over the Fish of the Sea, the Fowls of the Air, and over the Beasts of the Field. And as for our drinking strong Liquors, the Coldness of our Northern Region requires it: For the continual Drinking of Water, as you do in these warm Climates, would kill us in the colder Climates of *Europe*. And we are taught in our Holy Law, that Happiness does not consist in *Meats and Drinks*.

Then, said the Prince, do you expect Heaven and Happiness by virtue of your Doctrine, or by your vertuous Conversation?

Whoever will be happy, must believe our Holy Doctrine, and lead Holy Lives: For *Faith* without *good Works* is *dead*, and therefore of no use at all, reply'd I.

Then, resum'd he, 'tis not your Religious Opinions, and different Articles of Faith can make you happy; but a good Conversation; all which we allow to be absolutely true: What then does it profit or avail, to dispute about empty Speculations? You recommend the Practice of all vertuous Action, and so do we, and are inferiour to none in punishing Vice.

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I answer'd, that 'twas not possible to perform Actions truly good and vertuous, without the Knowledge of the Will of God contained in the Christian Doctrine, which we preach among you : And as for such Christians, who are disobedient to the Precepts of the Gospel, 'tis their own fault ; and the Glorious Doctrine professed by them, is not to be charged with their Sins, without being guilty of the greatest Piece of Iniquity.

Hereupon the *Braman* asked me to give him an Account of the Christian Religion, as to its Original, and Progress among so many Nations ; and what were the chief Articles thereof ?

To all which Heads I made very particular Answers ; and to which they gave great Attention, and seemed to be very well pleased with what I said upon the chief Articles of the Christian Religion ; and desired me to stay with them for that Night, it being then very late. But my Business would not permit me ; and therefore I took my leave, and recommended them to the Care of the Almighty.

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Conference XXX.

Of the Heathens Alms. State of departed Souls.

Between some *Heathen Pilgrims*, and
one of the *Danish Missionaries*.

ON the Twenty sixth of *May*, I met
a great Multitude of Pilgrims, tra-
velling to visit a famous *Pagod*,
named *Ischirenkum*. I ask'd them
the reason of this long Journey ?

They said, our Parents at their Death o-
bliged us with a solemn Oath, to visit the
aforesaid Temple, to distribute Alms among
the *Bramans* there.

I ask'd further, what their Parents Aim
was in all this ?

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For the Repose of their Souls in the other World, said they : For, fearing their good Works were not sufficiently Meritorious, they engaged us to make up such Deficiencies, by distributing Alms liberally among the Priests residing at *Tschirenkum* ; and we hope our Children will do us the like good Offices when we are dead and gone ; and therefore we chearfully undergo this long tedious Journey : For we are taught, that the Souls departed, meet with many Hindrances and Difficulties in their Way to the other World, and some must undergo Hell-Torments, till such time as they are delivered thence by the *Bramish* Priests, who read the Law, and pray upon their Account, that God may give them speedy Deliverance.

I reply'd, You are grossly abus'd by the Priests in this, as well as in many other Points, for the sake of *Filthy Lucre* : For the Soul, as it leaves the Body, goes either to Heaven, or to Hell, whence there is no Redemption by Prayers of Priests, nor by Alms of Relations : For now, while we live, is the accepted time for Repentance ; and now is the *Day of Salvation* ; now is the time to deal your Bread among the Lame, the Blind, and very necessitous People, and not among the Priests, the Ministers and Promoters

moters of Idolatry, and the great Enemies of all that is truly Good and Religious.

Hereupon they told me, if giving of Alms to *Bramans*, and visiting of the Resident Places of the Gods were not good Works, they desired me to inform them, wherein did a good Work consist?

To this Question I answer'd very fully; giving all the Characteristick Marks of *Good Works*, and how dangerous 'tis to be mistaken in this Point.

Whereupon one cry'd out, all what you say, is very excellent; and especially that Assertion of yours, *We are not saved by our own good Works, but by the Grace of God.*

Your Observation, said I, is very just; and and I praise your quick Apprehension of Things: But this is not enough; you must likewise acknowledge, that all Grace and Mercy comes from *Jesus Christ*, who is the only *Mediator* between God and Man; and believe, and be baptiz'd in his Name.

Then a Woman stood up, and ask'd, why God saves some, and damns others?

I told them, that God would have all Men be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth; giving them at the same time all the Aids of his Grace, and the External Means of Salvation; exhorting and persuading them to turn to God; but that if they neglect the Day of Grace, and harden their Hearts, and despise the Messages and Messengers of good Tidings sent unto them, their Damnation is of themselves, and will be the just Punishment of their wilful Obstinacy and Disobedience.

Hereupon I was interrupted by an old Man lifting up his Voice; who bid me not to make so many Words about Bliss and Misery, Damnation and Happiness; for that there is no other Hell, than this Earth; upon which we live a Life of Misery, separated from God, because of former Transgression; and for the punishing us for the same, we are banished for a time from the Presence of God, and imprisoned in these frail crazy Frames of Flesh and Blood; but when that time appointed for the Expiation of our Sins shall come, we shall be delivered from our Bodies, and return into Heaven whence we came.

Here-

Hereupon I reply'd, This Earth, so glorious in all its Varieties, and wonderful in its Productions of all sorts, can't be the Place of Damnation : The spiritual Wick- ednesses, and grosser Impieties thereupon committed every Day, is owing to the first Man's Disobedience ; who, by sinning against God, drew a Curse upon himself and upon the whole Creation. That our *Souls* are nobly, and heavenly descended, I allow ; but that they are united to Moulds of Clay, upon Disobedience committed in a State and Capacity purely Spiritual and Pre-existent to his personal Union, is absolutely deny'd, as a gross Mistake flowing necessarily from your Ignorance of the History of the Creation, which teaches us how God created Man *after his own Image*, by breathing into his Nostrils the Breath of Life ; and how afterwards Man found out many Inventions, and sinned against God, and is now miserable in Soul and Body : But upon his turning unto his former Obedience, by believing in *Jesus Christ*, tho' (at the Dissolution of these Earthly Tabernacles, the Bodies are crumbled into Dust, and the Souls return to God that gave them ; yet at the great Day of Accompts the Souls shall re-assume their former Bodies, to the end they may be unitedly

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unitedly rewarded according to the Works done in the Flesh, whether Good or Evil. The Doctrine of the *Resurrection of the Flesh* offended some of them; which gave me a Handle to explain very fully this great Article of the *Christian Faith*: With which I concluded my Discourse.

Con-

Conference XXXI.

Of Christ, the Saviour of the World ; whether every one may be saved in his own Religion, &c.

Between some Heathens, and one of the Danish Missionaries.

ON the Twenty eighth of *May*, several Heathens came to see our *Printing-House* ; and finding some Sheets of *St. Matthew's Gospel*, newly printed in their own Language, they were very curious to know what it contain'd, and to know whose History it was.

I told them, that 'twas the History of *Jesus Christ* the Saviour of all Mankind ; and thence I took occasion to explain at large the whole Process of Man's Salvation, which they

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they did not at all disapprove of ; but affirmed, that every one might be saved in his own Religion ; and that the Gracious God would condemn none of his Creatures that seriously lov'd and fear'd him as the Supreme Being, merely for some speculative Errors, or some less considerable Failings in Moral Practice.

I granted them, that God was Gracious and Merciful ; but was likewise a Just and Holy God, punishing wilful Impiety, and an uninterrupted Course of Wickedness ; which is altogether inconsistent with an earnest and true Desire after Happiness, and the Enjoyment of God. And indeed, this is your Case ; for tho' God has been pleas'd to offer you the *Means of Grace* and Salvation, you despise his Offers, and cast his Words behind your Backs.

What, would you have us, Sir, turn Apostates from the Religion of our Fathers, and leave the Temples of our Gods, to the end we may embrace the Religion of Foreigners, and thereby be expos'd to the Contempt and Hatred of all our Country-men, by whose Means and Correspondence our selves and Families are provided for ? And besides all this, both Men and Women sit promiscuously in your Churches.

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To these and other such Objections, I answer'd what I thought to the purpose; shewing them, that 'twas necessary to suffer some Inconveniencies in this Life, when we were well assur'd to be infinitely rewarded with an *exceeding Weight of Glory* in that which is to come. And as to the promiscuous Assemblies of all Ranks and Sexes in our Churches, 'tis but what common Reason does dictate to us: For we are all created and maintained by the same God; and we have nothing but what we receive of his Hands; and if so, why should we vainly and foolishly say to our Brother, stand thou there, for I am holier than thou? We Christians are all Brethren and Sisters in Christ Jesus, enjoying the same Glorious Advantages of being esteemed the Children of God, and the Communion of Saints, which is an Article of our Holy Religion. Both Men and Women have Souls equally precious; and therefore must appear at the proper Place appointed for Publick Instruction, that they may be more and more confirm'd in the Doctrine of Salvation, and encouraged to walk in the Ways of Vertue to the Glory of him that has called them to the Profession of the Gospel.

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You keep your Women in Ignorance of all Religious Matters; all their Knowledge amounting only to this, that they can say the common Salutation *Shalam*, before an Image; and repeat a very short Form of Prayer, consisting only of Five Sylables, and assist at Festival Ceremonies.

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Conference XXXII.

*Whether we should know God,
and our own Minds first ;
or the Things obvious to
our Senses. Of Children
dying in their Infancy ,
&c.*

Between some *Bramans*, and one of
the *Danish* Missionaries:

ON the Thirtieth of *May*, I met in
a Neighbouring Village very ma-
ny *Bramans* ; and falling into
Discourse, we were presently
surrounded by a great Multitude of Hear-
ers.

The *Bramans* told me, that they would fain know my Opinion upon several Particulars, if I was disposed to entertain them with an amicable Conference.

I answer'd, Yes, provided the Subject-matter of Discourse be edifying to them that hear it.

Hereupon they, ask'd me, whether we should first endeavour after the Knowledge of our selves, and then study the natural Sciences; or, *vice versa*, first study the Arts and Sciences, and then Study the Nature of God and our selves?

I answer'd, you should, without doubt, know God and your selves in the first Place, as the most necessary and useful Knowledge; and then attach your selves to inferior Sciences.

Then they ask'd me, what I thought would become of the Souls of those Children that either died in the Mothers Womb, or in the State of Infancy, before the Years of Discretion?

I answer'd, that so soon as the Child is form'd in the Womb with an immortal Soul, he is already a perfect Man, and is endued with all the Faculties of a Rational Being, tho' he can't actually exert his Reason, in acting or discoursing as those of riper Years; because of the Tenderness of the bodily Organs in young Children: But as to their Souls, they are entire and perfect; and after their Separation from the Body, are capable of enjoying the Beatifical Vision of God in Heaven, as well as the Souls of those that live to Years of Maturity.

They ask'd me further about the Length, Breadth, and Profundity of Hell?

I told them, that Things spiritual were not to be measured by Yards and Inches; but that 'twas a State adapted for the Punishment of unrepenting Souls.

I was likewise ask'd, how many Languages were now spoken in Paradise; and whether the departed Souls of different Nations and Languages do understand one another in Heaven?

I reply'd, that Spirits have no Organs of Speech ; and therefore do not speak at all ; but whether they communicate their Thoughts one to another, and after what manner that is perform'd, that is what no Man can pretend to explain. And withal I begg'd leave to propose in my turn some Difficulties to their serious Consideration ; And first, I ask'd them, how they could worship those Imaginary Beings and Fictitious Gods, who, according to their own Authors, were more wickedly profligate, than the worst Miscreant among Rational Beings ?

They answer'd, that tho' 'twas true, that such and such Actions are related of the Gods which would be criminal and sinful in any Man to do the like, (for he is strictly forbidden to do so and so ;) Yet the Gods are subject to no Law and Precepts, whether Negative or Affirmative, and therefore could not be properly said to be guilty of any sinful Action : And we are no more allow'd to withdraw from them the useful Religious Worship paid to them for so many Ages by our Forefathers, than we are to deny our Allegiance to our Lawful King, upon pretence of some Irregularities in his Life, and Male-
admi-

administration of the publick Affairs of the Kingdom.

I ask'd them in the next place, if they could demonstrate that their Idols were true Gods ?

They answer'd, that the Matter being self-evident, wanted no Proofs or Demonstrations: For they had been ador'd as Gods for many thousands of Years, by all the Sages and wise Men in all the past Ages of the World.

Then I questioned them about the Original of their Law, and how it was introduc'd first into the World ; and wherein did it chiefly consist ?

They reply'd, The Gods themselves reveal'd unto their Prophets the several Precepts and Ceremonious Ordinances contain'd in their Law, and as for the several Historical Books relating to the Achievements and Heroick Actions of the Gods, they had been faithfully writ down by Learned Men that were Eye-witnesses of the said Transactions, and carefully preserv'd, and communicated to succeeding Ages, without the least Change or Alteration.

I ask'd them farther, how they could shew, that the Doctrine contained in their Law was a saving Doctrine?

They reply'd, as for moral Precepts, we can give you demonstrative Proofs thereof; but for the Precepts that relate to the Means of Salvation, as, the Performance of this or that Ceremony, we can give no reasonable Account of such and such Precepts; but believe them to be acceptable to God, when carefully put in Practice; not that they are more decent, or useful than other Ceremonies; but because they are the Rites that God commanded us carefully to observe; and hence 'tis, that we constantly believe the Way of Salvation to be One only; but the Religious Duties and Ordinances are very various in different Countries, and among different Orders of Men.

I proceeded in asking them wherein did the pretended Purity and Holiness of the *Bramans* consist?

They

They were pleas'd to give me the following Account of themselves ; We get up daily two Hours before Sun-rising, ease Nature, wash our Mouths, rinse our Teeth with clean Water ; then we wash our Bodies in consecrated Ponds, and repeat our ordinary Forms of Prayers, perform the usual Ceremonies, besrew our selves with consecrated Ashes made of Cows Dung, and walk about with some holy Relick in our Hands, for the Edification of the People ; then we offer Sacrifices in the *Pagods*, and do all the *Pagod*. Offices ; and when we walk out among the Populace, we give diligent heed that they don't touch us, for fear of being polluted by them ; We eat no Flesh, and drink no strong inebriating Liquors ; but feed upon clean wholesome Food ; and having spent one half of the Day in the Service of the Gods, the other half we spend in providing our selves with the Necessaries of Life.

I ask'd them in the last Place, where-
in their Prayers chiefly consisted ?

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Our Prayers, said they, are Forms, directed in general to the Supreme Being, or to this or that God in particular: Very often our Prayers are *extemporary* Effusions and Ejaculations of the Soul to God, praying for this or that Mercy, or for the Removal of some heavy Judgment.

Con-

Conference XXXIII.

*Of the Water of the River
Ganges ; of their Beads,
call'd Ruddiratschangel,
and how prepar'd.*

Between some Antigoels (an Order
of Ecclesiasticks) and one of the *Danish*
Missionaries.

ON the Fourth of June, I met near
a *Pagod*, very many of the *Anti-
goel* Order, employ'd in prepa-
ring *Beads*, called *Ruddiratschan-
gel*, esteemed by the *Heathens* as holy, and
precious Antidotes against all sorts of Occur-
rences : They are made of dry'd Berries
of a certain Tree ; and therefore I was desi-
rous to know, what gave them their Value,
and this more than Ordinary Esteem among
the People, seeing their intrinsick Worth was
but very inconsiderable ? They

They answer'd, that these sorts of Beads had been for some thousand Years uncontestedly an efficacious Medicine for Souls, and a Sovereign Amulet against the Power of Sin and Satan; and are likewise great Preservatives against all Diseases and Mischances attending all living Creatures; and they are not to be prepared by the prophane Vulgar; but by us of the holy and sanctified Order of *Antigoels*.

I told them that this could be nothing else but *Witchcraft*: For 'tis evident, that the Berries of Trees can't change the Constitution of a vicious Mind, and make it sober and temperate.

There was also present a Man, who had the Water of the River *Ganges* to distribute among the People at a very dear Rate. Him I likewise took to task, and ask'd, how the Water of that River, which is full of Carrion and dead Carkasses daily cast into it, should have a distinguishing Vertue from Waters of all other Rivers whatsoever?

But

But they told me, that this River sprung from Paradise ; and that therefore the Water of it was holy and efficacious to purge the Soul from all spiritual Distempers.

The Water-merchant added, if the Water of *Ganges* was not truly consecrated, why should so many Nations have Recourse to its holy Streams, rather than to other Rivers ?

I answer'd, that all their tedious Pilgrimages to *Ganges*, as well as to other Places of Devotion, was Superstition, Madness, and gross Ignorance of the Means of Salvation, ordained by God himself to change the Heart, and purifie the Conscience from dead Works. But you Heathens insisting upon the fabulous Traditions of credulous Antiquity, are resolved to march on in the dark, as your Fathers did before you, not unlike those blind Masters of Families, who heard much talking of an Elephant ; but because of their Blindness could form no true *Idea* of him ; but resolv'd that the Sense of Feeling should supply the Want of the visive Faculty. One of them took the Elephant by the Tail ; and going home, reported to his Wife and Children, that an Elephant was like a great Pole ;
another

300 *The Thirty third Conference, &c.*

another taking the Elephant by the Ear, reported to his Domesticks, that it was something like a Beesom; and a Third handling him by the Trunk, told his Children, that an Elephant was very like a Pestle, wherewith Rice is pounded in a Mortar; and their respective Families ever since entertain these different Notions of an Elephant. And thus 'tis with respect to the Notion you entertain of God, or the Supreme Being, holding tenaciously the foolish Traditions of your Fathers, blindfold and unexamined.

Con-

Conference XXXIV.

Of the Christian Religion ; and of the Mahometan.

Between a *Mahometan* Priest, and some
Moors, and one of the *Danish* Mis-
sionaries.

ON the Ninth of *June* I was visited
by a *Mahometan* Priest, accompa-
ny'd with a very numerous Re-
tinue of *Moors*; who told me, he
understood that I endeavour'd to introduce
a new Religion among them, never known
to *Moses*, *David*, *Christ*, nor *Mahomet*.

I reply'd, that he was strangely misinfor-
med : For we taught nothing but what *Mo-
ses*, *David* and *Jesus Christ* warranted us to
speak and teach : And this I made out very
fully, by shewing him, that we professed
the

302 *The Thirty fourth Conference,*

the Christian Religion in its Primitive Purity, containing all that *Moses* and *David* left behind them in their inspired Writings. But as for your *Mahomet*, he did but corrupt the Doctrine of the Prophets, and that of the Gospel of Christ: Out of which Corruption was generated that impure Mixture, or Compost, called the *Alcoran*.

The *Mahometan* reply'd, we acknowledge for Genuine, the Writings of Four Great Prophets, viz. *Moses*, who was sent from Heaven, to bless the World with Good Laws; but God failing of his Aim, sent *David* unto the World, to mitigate the Laws of *Moses*: But his Law was likewise disregarded, and violated by the greatest Part of Mankind: Whereupon *Isnabi* (Jesus Christ) was sent into the World, who was born of *Mary*, and did many Wonders, and liv'd most of his time in the Wilderness; never frequenting Cities, nor any Place inhabited by Mankind; wherefore the greatest part of the World despised his Law as not suited to civil Societies; but rather calculated for a few Hermits and Monks, affecting Wildernesses rather than populous Cities. Hereupon God Almighty resolving to accommodate all Degrees, Ranks and Conditions of Men, he sent *Mahomet* into the World to write the *Alcoran*, as dictated by

by the Angel *Gabriel*, suited to the Capacities and Humours of all sorts of People; allowing at the same time the Laws of *Moses*, *David*, and of *Christ*, to be Divine and Heavenly; only we give *Mahomet* the Preference, as being the last of all the Four mentioned Legislators; who unanimously asserted the Unity of One God. For tho' *Jesus Christ* was adored as God by some of his own Disciples and heedless Followers; yet he himself preach'd against the Plurality of Gods: And when he came to hear, that some of his Disciples adored him, calling him the Son of God, he abandon'd them to themselves, and retir'd into the Wilderness, where he made this excellent Prayer to the One God, saying, *Thou knowest right, O Great and Supreme Governour of the Universe, that I acknowledge no God besides thee; and yet against my Will and Orders, some of my Disciples adore me as a God, calling me thy Son, who didst neither beget, nor art begotten.*

Hence it came to pass, that the Disciples were of different Sentiments about their own Master; some holding the Doctrine of Unity, as *Christ* taught them; and others adored him as a God. Therefore *Mahomet* was sent into the World to destroy the Worship of many Gods, both among the *Heathens* and *Christians*.

I reply'd, that what he had reported of *Christ*, was partly true, and partly very Fabulous and False. And as for the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, I prov'd it to him out of the Writings of *Christ* himself, whom he allow'd to be a True Prophet; and consonant to the Doctrine taught in the *Psalms*, and in the Law of *Moses*, tho' not so clearly there express'd, as in the New Testament.

Well, said he, I have heard you preaching to day; and I don't altogether disapprove of your Religion; and was mightily pleas'd to see no Idols or Images in your Church, as among the *Portugueze*; who symbolize almost in every thing with the *Heathens*, in the Number of Idols and Graven Images. I was likewise in the *Danish* Church, where all the Hearers are White Men; and there also I saw some Images: Pray, are your Religions different?

I answer'd, that 'twas but One Religion; and those Images were not worshipp'd as by the *Portugueze*; but only serv'd as Ornaments to the Church, and as commemorative Signs of some Passages of *Christ's* Life and Sufferings. Upon this, I shew'd the Order we observ'd to bring up our Children in the Knowledge and Fear of God; and presented

presented him with some Books out of our Printing House, relating to the Principles of the Christian Religion ; with which he seemed very much satisfied ; assuring me, that he was charm'd with the Civility and kind Behaviour of the *Europeans*.

Then he bid me Adieu; promising to give me another Visit very soon.

The END of the CONFERENCES.

X

LETTERS



LETTERS

FROM THE

HEATHENS

TO THE

MISSIONARIES.

LETTER I.

*Of the Malabarian Regeneration, or
Metempsychosis.*

YOU the Venerable Priests of *Tranquebar*, have been pleased to favour me with the Continuance of your Love: And according to the best of my Capacity, I have endeavour'd hitherto to be punctual, in making the best

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Returns

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Returns to your several Interrogatories :
I do assure you, that I am readily disposed,
and very desirous to do you further Service.

You are pleased to ask me, what we mean by *Regeneration*, or our Second Birth ? Sirs, our Meaning is, that every Man born into this World, that leads a vertuous Life, exercising Repentance for past Transgressions, and abstaining for the future from the Practice of Vice, performing withal the Offerings and Ceremonies enjoyned by our Laws, shall at his Death, enter upon the real Enjoyment of Eternal Happiness ; and is not liable to the perplexing Necessity of being born of a Woman the second time. But such as live wickedly, and die without Repentance, must not only undergo punishing Severities in the other World ; but withal, their Souls will be re-committed into Bodies two-footed, four-footed, or volatile, to atone and do Penance for Sins committed in the former Body ; and in case of Non-repentance, their Nativity is to be still reiterated ; else they will never enter into Eternal Rest.

This is the receiv'd Opinion among our Learned Men, concerning this Matter ; and is all that I have to write upon this Head.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

Of the State of Departed Souls.

YOUR Letter I have receiv'd, containing some hard Questions, and your friendly Wishes for the Continuation of my Health, which, thro' God's Goodness and the Mediation of your Prayers, I hitherto enjoy : And as to your Demand about the *State of Separated Souls*, the common Opinion is, that *Emadudakel*, or the Messenger of Death, receives the Soul, as 'tis breathed out of the Body, into a kind of a Sack, and runs away with it thro' Briars, and Thorns, and burning Whirlwinds, which torment the Soul very sensibly, till he arrives at the Bank of a Fiery Current, thro' which he is to pass to the other side, in order to deliver the Soul to *Emen*, or the God of the Dead ; who refers the Examination thereof to his Secretary, named *Tschiddirabuddiren*, who is to make his Report to *Biruma* (or one of the three Persons in the *Malabarian* Godhead ;) who rewards Just and Holy Souls with the everlasting Fruition of God's Glorious Presence; but the Souls of the Wicked are tormented with Pains intolerably grievous &c.

L E T T E R III.

Of the Day of Judgment.

IN Answer to your Question, viz. *If all Men are to be rendezv'z'd in a General Assembly, to receive severally every one his Final Doom?* I reply, That when the Last of these Eighteen Great Durations of the World are at an End (each of which Durations, or Cycles, consisting of many thousand Years) then the Supream Being will summon the Dead to appear, in order to judge every one according to his Deeds, whether they be Good or Evil: The Godly are either receiv'd into an Eternal State of Happiness, or are to undergo another Birth, in order to be further purify'd, and to arrive to higher Degrees of Perfection: But they who lead vicious Lives, are sent to animate the Bodies of Flies, Birds, Dogs, Foxes, or other Beasts, in a new World: For there shall be then a new Creation of Sun, Moon and Stars, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Among the Four different Religions of the World, which is the most proper to render us happy in the next World?

IN. N. the unworthiest of your Slaves, greet you heartily with a profound *Schalam* (Salutation.) As to your Question, about the Choice of the best Religion, you are no doubt, better vers'd in this sort of Questions than I am; and at leastwise, are assured that Men can be saved in one Religion or another.

Our Sentiments about Religious Matters are very different in this Land; tho' we all agree in this, to mind more the Things of this World, than any Spiritual Concerns; and those few that have disengaged themselves from the Pleasures and Advantages of Life, and spend their time in the Pursuit of Heavenly Things, are look'd upon as Men arriv'd at the highest Degree of Perfection; tho' 'tis a receiv'd Opinion amongst us, that all such as lead a good and vertuous Life, may be saved in any Religion: And we shall

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begin with the *Mahometan*, which allows one married Wife, but Fourty eight Concubines ; and commands to pray five times a Day. Therefore I humbly conceive, that a Man may be saved in this Religion, if he unfeignedly believes the Principles thereof to be Divine and True ; seeing 'tis confess'd on all Hands, that *Faith* is the great Instrument of our Salvation ; but this we blame in the *Mahometan*, that he is for condemning all but himself.

The Law of the Christian is true and holy, comprehending the Life of Christ, who came into the World to teach Mankind the Way of Salvation, died and rose again, ordering the Use of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, and all other things necessary for the attaining of Salvation : But this we mightily dislike in your Religion, as abominable, that you spit [*They use to go out of the House to spit*] in your own and other Mens Presence ; that you converse with your Wives in the time of their Uncleaness ; and that you make no distinction between Families.

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As touching the *Jewish* Religion, 'tis known that that is comprehended in the Old Testament ; but seeing they expect a *Messias* to come to deliver them, and despise Christ and his Gospel, I really believe, they vainly hope for another Deliverer, &c.

LET-

L E T T E R V.

Of the Four Principalities into which the Kingdom of Tanjour is divided.

MOST Reverend Priests, Your favouring me with your entertaining Enquiries, obliges me to give you the best Informations I can in this Matter: The last King that reigned over the *Tanjourian* Kingdom, was named *Egoschirascha*; and died but Two Years ago; the present King's Name is *Sarumofchirascha*, and Rules absolutely in this Kingdom, by paying 3333 Dollers to the great *Mogul*, and as much to one of his Vicegerents in a Province bordering upon *Tanjour*. The King's younger Brother is called *Dukofchirascha*. There are four Lieutenants or Lords, that govern the four Provinces into which the Kingdom is divided; and their Names are *Suweatter Tscok Kapamudaliar*, *Suweitar Wawofchipandiden*, *Suweitar Schwaminadapullei*, and *Suweitar Annatschipandider*. The Residence of the first Lord is Southwards, and called *Dirutorapundi*; the Residence of the Second is *Kumbakonum*; of the Third, *Karuppuraneikurei*; and the City where the Fourth resides, is called *Kewirimairom*. One of these Lord.

Lordships fell to the share of the King's younger Brother at the Decease of *Egoschirafcha* their eldest Brother. The Inhabitants do not possess a Foot of Ground here; but all is the King's Land; yet Husbandry is promoted with all the Chearfulness imaginable: For the Lord Lieutenant gives them Seed to sow their Fields, gives Oxen to those that are Poor, and sometimes advances them Money to buy themselves Bread, till the Harvest comes; and then they are to receive two Fifths for their Labour, and the Remainder is the King's; but in other Provinces the same Proportion is not observed: For the Sovereign has more than three Fifths; and the Inhabitants somewhat less than two.

In the Province where *Bonumbalattapullei* governs, there was lately found an immense Treasure, with which he built a very Magnificent Palace, but neglecting to pay that Respect and Veneration to one of the King's Ministers, as was expected, 'twas insinuated to the King, that the Lieutenant's Wife and Daughter were such finished Beauties that the whole World could not parallel; and withal that he had built a very stately House, adorned with Columns so artificially Wrought, emulating the most Masterly Workmanship in the King's House; and that

that some of these stately Pillars were hollow within, filled with molten Gold, the better to hide his immense Treasures from the Knowledge of his Sovereign. Whereupon a Band of armed Men were sent to bring him to Court; and several great Ladies were sent thither to conduct to Court his Wife and Daughter; but the Lieutenant defending his House with Twenty armed Men, bid defiance to the King's Soldiers: which so enrag'd his Sovereign, that he ordered his House to be levell'd with the Ground, and all his Precious Furniture to be carried to Court.

The Inhabitants live very easie and happily in all these Four Provinces, except in *Mairom*; where they are cruelly oppress'd by a Rich *Braman*, whom the Lieutenant has vested with almost absolute Authority, so as to raise the Price of Corn at pleasure, refusing to give them their Proportion of the yearly Produce of their Ground. He raises Monopolies of all sorts of Provender for either Man or Beast, and sells it at an excessive Rate: And tho' repeated Complaints have been made against him, he always comes off with a good Grace, by the Means of large Presents to the King's Ministers, &c.

LET-

LETTER VI.

Of the Original of the City of Tranquebar ; and of the Danish Colony settl'd there.

MOST Venerable Priests, who worship the Three Glorious One God, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; who propagate the Knowledge of the True Religion, exercising Justice and Righteousness, and walking in the laudable Paths of Vertue; I, who am the meanest of your Servants, kiss your Feet with a profound *Schalam*.

The Family of the *Seelingers* (Mariners) inhabited the Towns *Dirumaleiwafhel*, *Dirukareiur*, and *Dirukilatscher*, for 300 Years; afterwards a wise Man came to understand, that in this Place the City of *Tranquebar* had been, but since destroy'd by Inundations, and converted into a Mountain of Sand: Whereupon a *Braman*, accompany'd with one of his Disciples, coming to view the Place, they discovered some Remains of a Temple overgrown with Wood: For which reason Orders were immediately given to clear

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clear the Ground, and make the Place habitable.

In the time of King *Arschudappanaiker* arrived here a *Danish* Admiral, who was kindly received by our Governours; and, to his great Satisfaction, procured Freedom to build a Fortrefs in the Year 1610: The Governour's Name was *Gale de Gedde*: Since which time the Place has been more and more fortified; and the *Danes* don't only oblige all Merchant Ships arriving here, to pay Custom; but raise Contributions from many of our Neighbouring Villages.

LET-

L E T T E R VII.

*Of the Contents of a Famous Book, call'd
Diruwalluwer.*

MOST Reverend Priests, in compliance with my own Duty, and your just Desires, I send you the following Account of our celebrated Poem, call'd *Diruwalluwer* : It contains 1330 Verses ; the Chapter call'd *Arupal*, has 38 Leaves, containing 380 Verses ; the Chapter *Poralpal*, 70 Leaves, containing 700 Verses ; the Chapter *Rumapal*, 25 Leaves, and 250 Verses. The first of these Chapters teaches the Difference between Vice and Vertue, and the Manner of performing all good Works, whether Religious or Civil ; the second Chapter teaches how to direct our Thoughts in the Contemplation of Death, and how we are to carry our selves in Buying and Selling ; and the third and last Chapter treats of all the Duties relating to a Marriage-State.

LETTER

L E T T E R VIII.

Of the Malabarians Notion of Happiness and Misery ; or, their Heaven and Hell.

GOD inhabits *Koliaschum*, or Paradise ; in which there are several Mansions for Prophets of different Degrees, to bring their Offerings and Sacrifice before the Supreme Being. This delicious Place is bless'd and adorn'd with Flowers, Gardens plentifully affording all sorts of Fruits, with sacred Springs and Fountains of Living Water ; where also Heavenly Birds, such as Fine Parrots, render the Place more agreeably bless'd, and perfectly delicious. The Faithful and Godly Souls departed this Life, shall see God Face to Face, thro' all the never-ceasing Ages of Eternity.

On the contrary, Hell is the Residence of *Emen* (Death,) and is called *Emalogu* ; and is a large fiery Cellar, where there are fiery Leeches, which torment Sinners proportionably to the Degrees of their Crimes.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Of the End of the World.

BEFORE the End of the World, we constantly believe, that the North, South, East, and West Seas, shall be all blended together, and make but one Great Sea; and that the all living Creatures, (the Inferior Gods themselves not excepted) shall cease to be distinct separate Beings, by being swallowed up into the Nature of the One only God, the primary Cause of all things: And there will be a new Creation immediately follow: The Supreme Being will create a Set of new Gods; and these new Gods will form all sorts of Mineral, Vegetative, and Animated Beings, much the same as they were before.

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LET:

L E T T E R X.

Deliverance from Sin. The chief End of Man, Duty towards his Creator, and Knowledge towards God.

WE believe, the Way to expiate the Guilt of Sin, is, with Drink and Meat Offerings, visiting the *Pagads*, building new, or by repairing Publick Houses to entertain Strangers in, by Cloathing and Feeding the Priests, and Building Houses for the *Bramans*, spending part of our time in Pilgrimaging from one Place of Devotion to another; and by doing more such Offices towards our Fellow Creatures.

The chief End of Man's Creation, is to know God, and direct daily Prayers, and offer Sacrifices unto him; and that Man should study, read, and meditate on the Divine Laws.

And as to the Duties that God requires of Man, they are such as these; Every good Man is obliged to get up at Three a-clock in the Morning, rinse and cleanse his Teeth, besprinkle

besprinkle himself with consecrated Ashes bathe himself in Holy Streams, and then prepare a Drink-Offering of Honey, Milk, Sugar, Lemmons, Kokus-water, and *Kungumi*-Flowers, and of other such Aromatick Spices ; repeat several Forms of Prayers, and attend diligently the *Pagod*-Worship.

In the last place, and in Answer to your Question, viz. wherein the Knowledge of ones self consists ? I answer, that in order to know our selves thoroughly, we must be well skill'd in the Nature of the five Elements ; as also their different Effects and Properties. We must be very well acquainted with the Doctrine of Respiration and Inspiration, and be able to know how many times he fetches his Breath in one Day ; which according to Computation, is twenty one thousand, and two hundred times. Moreover he must know where the Sence of Feeling is, when a Man sleeps ? Wherein does Life properly consist, and where is the Seat thereof ? Lastly, he must be well read in the Doctrine of the Causes and Symptoms of all Diseases ; well acquainted with his own Complexion ; and in fine, be able to account both for Memory and Forgetfulness. Such a Man as this, may be properly said to know himself.

LETTER XI.

Of the Malabarians Opinion of the Christian Religion.

THE Law of the Christians is holy, just, and good; the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Life of Christ, and of his Twelve Apostles are all very edifying; and so are your Commandments and Articles of Faith; Moreover, you affirm, that in the Beginning God did only create the Man and the Woman; All which I believe to be very true: And indeed, your Law seems to be a clear Mirrour, without Flaw or Blemish; and did you but abstain from your eating of Cows Flesh, spitting in your Houses, and some other daily Nastinesses committed by you; and on the contrary, accustom yourselves to washing your Bodies more often, and act nothing against Purification and Cleanliness; we assure you, the whole Nation would have nothing to say against your Discipline, except your giving out, that you eat the Body of Christ, and drink his Blood in the Sacrament; which I humbly conceive, none of us will ever be able to comprehend.

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LETTER XII.

*The Religion of the Heathens and Turks
compared together.*

Reverend Sir, you desire to know if any one living according to the Principles of the *Mahometan* Religion, may obtain everlasting Life and Happiness ; and which I judge to be the best, this, or my own *Malabarian* Religion ? In order to satisfy your Question, give me leave to tell you, that our Religion is as old as the World, which is indeed, a tenfold Law or Religion, marking out unto Mankind Ten different unerring Ways of attaining Salvation ; or as we are wont to express it, *Ten several Offerings* : For this, or that Way of worshipping God, assisting at such or such Ceremonies, leading this or that sort of Life, we call Offerings made of our Time and Labour to the Service of God ; whereof the first is this, which requires, That a Man do believe in the great Sovereign Being, revere and adore him, offer unto him, and love him with all his Heart, and with his Lips sing forth the Praises due to his Name.

The second Way of attaining Happiness, is, to worship God without the Intervention of Images and *Pagods*, by directing our Minds and Hearts immediately to the Supreme Being, regarding all the different Religions this day established in the different Countries of the World, to be equally good or bad : For such a Votary ties himself to no Sett of publick Ceremonies ; but worships God in Spirit and in Truth, and believes him to be all-seeing, All in all, and every where equally present.

The third Way of attaining Salvation, is by offering to the *Piratti Lingum*, which is an Image of a Man made of Dung, which we bestrew with sweet-scented Flowers, and direct *Formula's* of Prayers to it, with great Devotion ; and believe in so doing, to attain Salvation and Eternal Happiness ; because we are commanded so to do by the Law of God.

The fourth Way of attaining Happiness, is by leading a Monastical Life, abandoning House and Home, and all the Pleasures that attend a social Life, by living in Wildernesses and Woods, separated from the rest of Mankind.

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The fifth Way to Happiness, is Celibacy, holding no Commerce or Familiarity with Women; or, if one is married, by giving his Wife a Bill of Divorce, living chastly and soberly the remainder of his Life. We believe that such Men as these will be certainly happy in the other World, for generously (for the sake of God) despising the Pleasures of this.

The sixth Way leading to eternal Happiness, is, the observing diligently the strict Performances of the Ceremonious Rites and Offerings order'd us by the Priests in the *Pagods*, and studying to be useful and beneficial to all Mankind.

The seventh Way to Happiness, is blindly to follow in all things the Dictates and Commands of our Priests, and believe what they bid us, whether it be good or bad: For we are not to search into the Nature of Vice and Vertue; but square our Lives by the Exemplary Lives of holy Priests and Men of God.

The eighth Way leading to Eternal Happiness, is the Exercise of all sorts of good Works; by distributing Rice among the Poor, clothing some, Furnishing others with

Money, building Houses for the *Bramans*, and publick Inns for poor Pilgrims and Strangers.

The ninth Way to Happiness, is the leading a strict Life according to the Commandments of our Law ; and constantly offering to *Wischtnu*, is the Tenth Way to attain Eternal Happiness.

As for the *Mahometan* Religion, the Professors thereof cry it up for the best Religion in the World, which we constantly deny ; tho' we acknowledge at the same time the *Mahometans* to be a wise People ; neither do we pretend to blaspheme their Religion ; but confess ingenuously, if they do live up to what they profess, God in Mercy will save their Souls.

LETTER XIII.

Of the several Kings and Princes who have rul'd in the Malabarian and neighbouring Kingdoms.

TO comply with your Commands, I send you the following Account of the several Kings and Princes that have governed for the last 85 Years in our Neighbouring Kingdoms.

In the last *Antu* (the Space of 60 Years) King *Regunadanaiker* rul'd in the Kingdom of *Tschoromandel*, King *Marudeiwira-panaiker* rul'd in *Diritschanapal*: These, and many more petty Kings, have neither Crowns, nor Scepters; but King *Tschingamagarascha* descended lineally from the Sun, hath wore a Crown, and rul'd in *Kandi*, or in the famous Island of *Ceylon*: He built many *Pagods*, Houses for *Bramans*, and for Pilgrims in every City, endow'd with Yearly Revenues, and all possible Accommodations, and with all Eatables, and even with Milk for Babes, who might with their Nurses pass that way: Besides, he gave general Orders
to

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to conduct the Pilgrims into their Lodgings in dark Nights with Flambeaux and Torches. He never perverted Justice; but the Poor and the Rich were treated according to the strictest Impartiality of distributive Justice; His Treasure was inexhaustible; and after he had reigned fourty Years, he died, to the great Loss of all his Subjects.

In this present *Antu*, reigns in the Kingdom of *Tschoromandel* the Son of *Regunadanaiker*. The present King of *Ceylon* is called after his Father's Name, *Tschingamarascha*.

When there was a great Dearth in the Kingdom of *Coromandel*, the King order'd his Officers to call together a hundred thousand Men to be supplied with Meat and Drink in those hard times. And the King calling for a Balance, put himself in one Scale thereof, and Gold enough to counterbalance in the other Scale; which Gold he immediately caused to be distributed among the People: He continu'd for some time to be an Universal Blessing to his Countrey; following the good Example of Pious Kings his Predecessors; but afterwards prov'd to be a cruel Tyrant, plundering his Subjects of their best Effects; and if any had a handsome Woman to his Wife, the King carried her away by force, giving in lieu thereof a Piece
of

of Money to the injured Husband. He had One hundred and fifteen married Wives, and one Thousand Concubines : Three hundred and threescore Women did dance daily in his Presence ; his *Palanquin* was always born by Women ; Women carried *Flambeaux* and *Torches* before him, attended him with *Umbrello's*, play'd on Instruments ; and all the other Court-Employments within Doors were all done by Women ; whereof no less than Five thousand were employ'd in his Family : All which Women, with all his Jewels and vast Treasures, he caused to be shut up in a House, and to be blown into the Air with Gun powder, at the Approach of the Army of the Great *Mogul* to besiege *Tanjour*, one of his chief Cities. His two Sons seeing their Father's Cowardice, in not daring to fight the Great *Mogul*, offer'd their Service to the King, and undertook to defeat all the *Mogulish* Army, if their Father would but entrust them with the Command of Four and twenty thousand Men. Is it so, reply'd the Father, then when you have defeated the Great *Mogul*, you'll employ your Prowess against my self ; whereupon the two Brothers were shut up in a dark Chamber, and starv'd to Death. Some time after, this bloody Man, at the Sacking of *Tanjour* was taken and hewn to pieces by his Enemies.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

Of the Sacerdotal and Regal Dignity.

YOU were pleas'd to ask our Opinion in relation to the Sacerdotal and Regal Dignity ; and which in our Judgment is the more Excellent ?

We conceive the Matter thus ; the Priests teach and instruct the King himself in the Precepts of Wisdom and Religion, and shews him the Ways of Salvation ; and Kings and Princes rule Kingdoms and Principalities ; and their Authority relates only to the Things of this Life : So that the King and the Priest are highly to be esteem'd and revered ; but with Respects of a very different kind ; the Authority of the one regarding only our spiritual, and that of the other, our Temporal and Worldly Welfare.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Of buying Slaves ; of making War, whether Lawful.

IN answer to your several Questions, we send you our Meaning in few Lines : And in the first Place, touching such Persons as make it their Business to cajole half witted innocent Men with large Promises, and other Allurements, in order to master them afterwards, by reducing them into the Condition of Slaves, we look upon such Men, incapable of receiving Forgiveness of Sins, and of enjoying future Happiness : And 'tis a Proverb common among us, That a City driving such infamous Commerce, can never increase, nor prosper.

We believe it lawful to make War upon our Enemies that wrong and injure us; and if the King in such Cases does not defend his Subjects by repelling Force with Force, he forfeits his Crown and Scepter : And 'tis written in one of our Books call'd *Raschianidisastirum*, that tho' a sanctified
Cow

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Cow should attempt to gore a Man violently; 'tis then lawful to kill her, which otherwise is here a very Capital Crime.

Moreover, we believe, that all that die in a lawful War in the Defence of their Countrey, are receiv'd into Paradise; and he that kills an Enemy, is recompensed in the other World with higher Degrees of Glory and Happiness, &c.

In answer to your letter of the 10th of May we send you our Meaning in the Lines: And in the first Place, touching such Persons as make it their Business to chase half-witted innocent Men with large Promises, and other Allurements, in order to master them afterwards, by reducing them into the Condition of Slaves, we look upon such Men, incapable of receiving Forgiveness of sins, and of enjoying the Blessings of a Province.

And as a Province com-

mon among us, I hat a City driving such

minions, can never increase, nor

prosper, and all to what end, and for what

We believe it lawful to make War up-
on our Enemies that wrong and injure us;
and if the King in such Cases does not
send Subjects by repelling Force with

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And is written in one of our Books call'd
Mishnah, that tho' a sanctified
Cow

L E T T E R XVI.

Of the Indian and European Civil Government; and which ought to be esteemed the best.

OUR Civil Law in *Malabar* is very excellent, grounded on Justice and Equity, and the Proceeding is according to Evidences, and testimonial Depositions of faithful and honest Men; but very often there are great Mistakes committed in the Executive Part of our Laws, through the Negligence of our Kings, and Corruption of wicked Ministers.

We readily acknowledge the *Europeans* to be a very polite and well disciplin'd People; especially at Sea, and at Fire-Arms; but in weilding a Sword, or in managing Bows and Arrows, fighting upon Elephants and Camels, or in warlike Stratagems, the *Europeans* are not to be compared with our *Malabarian* Soldiers; and this I'll exemplifie in one of our Kings who rul'd about Twenty Years ago in *Diritscinapoli* over seventy Governors of Provinces, whereof every one could

could bring upon his own Charges some Thousands of Men to the Field; and because conscious of their great Strength, they disregarded the young King's Orders, the King immediately drew together twenty thousand Foot and three thousand Horse, ordering them to march out of their Garrisons, to take the Benefit of Countrey-Air for his Majesty's Diversion; and in the space of six Days, he came before a Town belonging to one of his seventy Deputy-Governours, rode in alone with his drawn Sword, and finding the Governour in the Streets, he cut him to Pieces; after which bold Action, (all the People knowing 'twas their King;) the Governour's Son threw himself immediately at his Majesty's Feet, begging that his Life might be spar'd, offering twenty thousand *Perdous* for his Pardon.

The King answer'd, don't fear, thy Life is spar'd; thy Father neglected to pay me due Homage; therefore I killed him; but take care to rule my People with Equity and Prudence.

Thence he march'd with his Elephants and armed Men before another City, which he found unguarded, open, and Exposed to the least Insult of a Neighbouring Enemy. He call'd the Governour of the Place; who

ran

ran with Presents, and threw himself at the King's Feet, begging that his Life might be spared, and that his present Negligence might be pardoned; promising to be more carefully circumspect for the future; begging his Majesty to accept of a Golden *Palanquin* (a Chair carried on two Mens Shoulders) valued at 122000 *Perdous*, and several Bushels of Pearls, Corals and other precious Stones. The King accepted the Presents, and charg'd him upon Penalty of his high Displeasure to be more watchful in the Discharge of his Emloyment for the time to come; and march'd thence to visit unexpectedly the other strong Places of his Kingdom, hewing into Pieces the Governours that neglected their Duty, or did not pay him due Homage; which struck a Terror into all the adjacent Princes, that they were in great fear of him; and the Great *Mogul* of the *Indies* could not force him to pay him Tribute as his Predecessors did.

This King in all warlike Achievements was another *Wiratschuren* (i. e.) another *Alexander*: For when a Tyger raging Mad, came out of the Forest, and the Army was in its March, all the Soldiers did quake and tremble; but the King rode on boldly, and with one Stroke of his broad Sword, cut the Tyger's Body in two: And we have many such brave Men among us in these Countries.

LETTER XVII.

*About the different Kinds or Species of
Living Creatures.*

THE different *Species* of vegetative and living Creatures are Eighty four Hundred Thousand in Number ; whereof there are Twenty Hundred Thousand *Species* of Trees, Nine Hundred Thousand different kinds of Fish, One Hundred Thousand sorts of Worms and creeping Things, Ten Hundred Thousand Kinds of Birds ; and from the Elephant to the Ant, there are Thirty Hundred Thousand different sorts of walking Creatures. In the last place, we compute Four Hundred Thousand different sorts of Men.

We have a learned *Braman* among us, who hath with a great deal of Industry, methodically, and at length, specified in Writing, all these different sorts of Beings ; describing their Figure, Properties, and the respective Countries where they are to be found ; whereof he hath promised to send you a Copy with the first Opportunity,

LET.

L E T T E R XVIII.

If it is the Will of God, that all Men should be saved ; and of the Form of God.

YOU are pleas'd to ask me, if God would have all Men be saved from Hell-Torments, and be happy for ever ?

I answer, Yes ; because God is gracious and merciful towards all his Creatures ; and in pardoning great Sins, his Grace and Goodness are more conspicuously glorified : But if Sinners go on in their Obstinacy and Disobedience, God justly punishes such with the most exquisite Pains of Hell ; according as 'tis written in our Law.

And as touching the Form of the Supreme Being, he is represented to us, sitting upon the Top of a Silver Mountain in Paradise, holding a Deer by the Horns in one Hand, and his Bow and Arrows in another. He has five Faces, three Eyes, covered all over with Holy Ashes, and has

his Neck twisted about with a hideous Serpent.

Others describe him quite otherwise ; saying, he is neither One, nor Two, neither Light nor Darkneſs ; that he is neither excluded from , nor circumscribed in any Place ; is not to be reſembled to any Creature whatſoever.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

Reasons why the Malabarians reject the Christian Religion.

YOU desired me in your last, to give you my Reasons why our People don't embrace the Christian Religion after you have taken so much pains to prove the Truth thereof with so many Evident Demonstrations; and have as fully shew'd the Falseness of our *Malabarian* Worship?

And I find you are much astonished at our Infidelity. But, Sirs, give us leave to tell you, that we can't see that you have sufficiently proved our Law to be false and altogether erroneous; nor so clearly and evidently prov'd the Truth of your own, that we should inconsiderately change the Religion of our Fathers for that of Foreigners and Sojourners in our Land: For I would have you know, that as *Christians* and *Mahometans* derive their Laws from God; so do we: For certainly, you can't imagine, that we hammer'd and forged a Religion to our selves, more than you.

The *Mahometan* will have his Religion to be absolutely the best ; the *Christians* condemn all but themselves ; and we *Malabarians* think our Religion to be the best for us ; and Question not but that the *Christians* may be saved if they lead Lives conformable to the Precepts of their Religion.

Which is the best Religion, is a difficult Task to know ; for even among our selves we have many different Opinions ; some affirming that *Isuren* is the Supreme God, others stand up for *Wischtuu* ; and there are as many learned Men, who plead for the God *Tschiwens* ; and I think 'tis Prudence not to trouble my self with the Truth or Falshood of your Religion, till I know first, which is the truest of the many Opinions relating to Religion, that we entertain here among our selves.

A LET.

A
LETTER
FROM THE
MISSIONARIES
TO THEIR
Friend in *Europe*.

Most worthy Sir,

WE Praise God with all our Hearts, for making you so useful an Instrument in *England* to further the Progress of the Gospel among the Gentiles; both by your good Counsels and Sums of Money that you were pleas'd to send us at several times: And we thank you more especially, for the great Pains you took lately to translate our *German* Relations of the Progress of the Gospel among the *Indians*, into the *English* Language; which will, as we have grounds to hope, awaken the Zeal and Cha-

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rity of that generous Nation, to assist our Endeavours in preaching the Word of God among the Unbelievers ; and upon this Account, we look upon you to be our *Fellow-Labourer* in the Work of the Lord, in preaching the glad Tidings of Salvation among the Unbelieving *Indians* : And we beg earnestly, that God Almighty will be pleas'd to preserve your precious Life in Peace and Prosperity, that you may go on and do us more good.

We receiv'd your Letters of Exchange by a Ship call'd *Janne* ; one for 25 Pounds, and the other for 10 Pounds ; both which Sums have been paid us at *Madras*, (i. e.) Fort St. George.

We receiv'd two other Letters from you by another Ship lately arriv'd upon our Coasts ; which were very acceptable to us, both with regard to the Author, and to the excellent Instructions for carrying on the Work of Conversion successfully.

Two Letters from the Society settled at *London* for propagating of the Gospel, came safe to our Hands, and rejoiced our Hearts exceedingly. The Lord strengthen the Hands of those pious and truly honourable good Christians, to do more and more good
both

to their Friend in Europe. 345

both in the Christian and Gentile World.

All Helps sent us by that Generous and Noble Company, are happily arriv'd, and are to us very acceptable ; and more especially the *Printing-Press*, with all its *Appendices* ; which we are getting in order with all possible speed ; and we hope to send by the next Ship a Proof, or *Specimen*, of our *Malabar* Printing, to our great Patrons and generous Benefactors in *England* ; whence we expect farther Assistances, that being of all the Nations of *Europe*, the most capable of extending the Limits of Christ's Kingdom, by their frequent Navigations, and many Settlements in both the *Indies*.

Oh ! When will the time be, that all the Protestant Nations will joyn Hands and Hearts, to destroy the Worship of Devils ; and break to Pieces the Idols of the Heathens, that the Name of *Jesus* may be made known to all the Nations of the Earth. The Undertaking is great and feasible, back'd with many precious Promises both from the Old and New Testament, viz. that all the Kingdoms of the World will become the Kingdoms of God and his Christ.

We

We see before our Eyes, the Harvest to be very great, and ripe for the Sickle ; but we want Hands ; we want Temporal Subsidies ; and therefore the Labourers are too few to till so large a Vineyard.

Surely, such Christians who are averse to this pious Work, can have no real Love to the Christian Religion !

We would humbly propose to the Protestant Churches, to supply us with learned Students in Divinity, and send them here to be instructed in the *Indian* Languages, to capacitate them for future Service, under our Direction, who have by our long practising these People, div'd into their Inclinations ; and know upon our own Experience, what sort of Arguments are most likely to gain their Approbation, and persuade them to hear patiently the Admonitions of the Lord ; but these Students must be Men truly fearing God, and hating Covetousness ; disengaged from all Earthly Ties of Self-seeking, and from the inveterate Ecclesiastical Itch of ruling over God's Inheritance : For if the Ministers of the Gospel are otherwise minded, all their Learning will have no other Effect than to persuade Christians to turn Heathens, and confirm Heathens in their Infidelity.

If

If we were blest'd with faithful Fellow-Labourers in this great Work, we have all the fair Prospects of spreading the Knowledge of Christ among many populous Nations of the *Indies*.

The *English* have several Settlements on the Coast of *Bengal*, and the *Dutch* in many Places of the *Indies*, which afford us an open Door to preach among the Neighbouring Heathens.

I have writ to *Batavia* and to *Ceylon*, to be informed of what Methods have been taken by the Nation last mention'd, for the Propagation of the Gospel ; but hitherto I have no other Account, than, that all the *Portuguese* Churches collected formerly in these Countries by the *Portugal* Missionaries, were brought over to the *Dutch* Discipline, in all the Plantations taken from the *Portuguese* by the *Dutch* Company. But in these Countries they have undertook nothing in favour of the Christian Religion, tho' they have many Converted *Indians*, whereof some are Slaves ; among whom there is a Lecturer who reads Service in *Portuguese*, and Administers the Sacrament to them Weekly.

There

There was a Minister in *Nagapatnam* ; but he is gone away. And in the populous Town of *Hygly*, on the Coast of *Bengal*, there is a great Number of Dutch Merchants ; yet they have no Preacher among them.

'Tis certain that God has wonderfully bless'd the *Dutch* Nation in all their laudable Undertakings in these Countries ; and therefore we firmly persuade our selves, that at this Juncture (that seems to be favourable for dilating the Knowledge of Christ among these Nations) the *Hollanders* will cheerfully come to our Assistance.

The *Portugueze* Missionaries in the Space of about Two Hundred Years, brought over to the *Romish* Persuasion almost all the Maritime Towns ; but now this seems to be in a declining state ; For few of the Missionaries learn the *Indian* Languages, so as to be able to teach the Heathens ; but content themselves with reading the Mass in the *Latin* Tongue, and trust the Natives with the important Office of Preaching ; who are no Way qualified for so high an Employment : For they know nothing else but to repeat the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and *Ave Maria*, and to sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross.

Upon

Upon some Festivals the *Portugueze* Fathers do preach in their own Language; and that but very seldom.

There is no disciplinary Institution observed among these Christians; so that they are more scandalously corrupted in their Manners, than the Heathens themselves; and they symbolize with them in most of their Ceremonies; and there is little or no Difference between a *Portugueze Church* and a *Heathen Pagod*, with regard to all outward Rites and Ceremonies, and the Idolatrous Worship of Images.

'Tis reasonable to believe, that the first Missionaries were heartily zealous in persuading their new Converts to the Necessity of living holy and pious Lives, worthy of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ*: But since the *Portugueze* Empire in these Countries has been destroyed by the *Hollanders*, the *Roman Catholick* Christians have but a mere Form of Godliness without the Power thereof.

All the Account that I can give you of the Christians of *St. Thomas*, is, as followeth?

Within

Within a Mile of *Madras*, or Fort *St. George*, there is a Town called *Mailapour*, (i. e.) a Town of Peacocks; because those Birds are very numerous in the neighbouring Mountains.

This Town by the *Portuguese* is called *St. Thomas*; because that the Apostle of that Name preach'd the Gospel there, confirming his Doctrine with many Miracles.

Those Ancient Christians are still to be found in *Cochin*, in the Southern Coasts of *Malabar*: And, if we believe the *Portuguese*, they are now reconcil'd to the *Roman Church*.

As touching the Writings of the *Portugal* Missionaries, we can give you but a very imperfect Account; only we understand, that here and there, some Manuscripts are yet extant in the *Malabarian* Tongue; but the most Valuable were lost, when the *Hollanders* made themselves Masters of this Countrey. These Writings consist chiefly of the Life of Christ, his Apostles, and of several *Romish* Saints, larded with Fables and lying Wonders.

Some

Some of their Missionaries lead an Eremitical Life at some distance from Towns and Villages; and call themselves *Northern Bramans*; a Sect of *Hermits* highly esteemed among the Heathens.

Among the *Mahometans*, we find very many Hermits, who professing Poverty, go about from Place to Place, making a Trade of begging; and are highly esteemed by the People, for Men disinterest'dly holy; many whereof protest against all the Pompous Train of External Ceremonies and *Pagod-Worship*; exhorting the People to worship God in Sincerity and in Truth, with a Mind full of Humility and Godly Fear.

There are yet remaining some Cloysters of *Portugueze* Monks in these Countries, as in *Europe*; and likewise Schools and Colleges, in the *French* and *Portugueze* Settlements.

We humbly desire you, Sir, to assure our Patrons and Benefactors in *Europe*, that we are very thankful for Favours receiv'd; and are resolv'd to preach the Gospel in Season and out of Season; and our own Lives shall not be counted dear unto us, so we
may

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may any way promote the Conversion of the *Gentiles* to the Obedience of Christ.

Pray, assist us with your Daily Prayers; and, as often as you can, with your Counsels and other Christian Offices.

Yours, &c.

B. Ziegenbalg.

J. E. Grundler.



F I N I S.

